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Mrs Harris. from Lady Poulman

THE SHELTERING VINE.

Selections

BY

THE COUNTESS OF NORTHESK.

"I AM THE VINE, YE ARE THE BRANCHES; . . . ."
"ABIDE IN ME AND I IN YOU. . . . ."

JOHN XV. 4, 5.

Thou God of love, beneath Thy sheltering wings
We leave our holy dead
To rest in hope From this world's sufferings
Their souls have fled.

Oh, when our souls are burdened with the weight
Of life and all its woes,
Let us remember them, and calmly wait
For our life's close.

FROM "THE DOVE ON THE CROSS."

SEQUEL.

Second Edition.

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PART V.

ON THE LOSS OF FRIENDS.

No 1.

Selection of Texts from Holy Scripture.

NUMBERS XXIII. 10.

Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.

PSALM XVI. 8; GENESIS XVI. 13.

May I set the Lord always before me; for thou, Lord, seest me.

JOB XIX. 21.

Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me.

PART V.

On the Loss of Friends.

No. 1.

SELECTION OF TEXTS FROM HOLY SCRIPTURE.

EXODUS.

Chap. III. 7. And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people; . . . . . for I know their sorrows; 8. And I am come down to deliver them.

DEUTERONOMY.

IV. 30. When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice; 31. (For the Lord thy God is a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee.

VIII. Thou shalt also consider in thine heart,

that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee.

1 SAMUEL.

III. 18. It is the Lord: let him do what seemeth him good.

2 SAMUEL.

XII. 15. And the Lord struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick. 16. David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth. 17. And the elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them. 18. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead? 12. But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead. 20. Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his

apparel, and came into the house of the Lord, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat. 21. Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the child, while it was alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread. 22. And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? 23. But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.

2 KINGS.

IV. 18. And when the child was grown, it fell on a day, that he went out to his father to the reapers. 19. And he said unto his father, My head, my head, And he said to a lad, Carry him to his mother. 20. And when he had taken him, and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and then died. 21. And she went up, and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and shut the door upon him, and went out. 25. So she went and came unto the man of God to mount Carmel. And it came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar

off, that he said to Gehazi his servant, Behold, yonder is that Shunammite: 26. Run now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say unto her, Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child? And she answered, *It is well.*

JOB.

I. 21. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

II. 10. Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?

V. 6. Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground. 7. Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward. 8. I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause.

IX. 12. Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him? who will say unto him, What doest thou?

XII. 9. Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this? 10. In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.

XXXIV. 28. He heareth the cry of the afflicted.

PSALMS.

IX. 9. The Lord will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.

XXVII. 5. For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.

XXXIV. 19. Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of all. 22. The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.

XXXVII. 37. Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.

XXXIX. 9. I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it.

L. 15. Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.

LVI. 8. Put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?

LVII. 1. Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.

LXI. 2. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

LXVIII. 5. A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation.

XC. 3. Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men. 5. Thou

carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep; in the morning they are like grass which groweth up. 6. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth. 10. The days of our years are three-score years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. 12. So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

XCI. 15. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him.

XCIV. 12. Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law. 19. In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul. 22. But the Lord is my defence; and my God is the rock of my refuge.

CIII. 15. As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. 16. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more. 17. But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; 18. To such as keep his covenant, and think upon his commandments to do them.

CIV. 29. Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust.

CXVI. 15. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

CXIX. 71. It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes. 75. I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hath afflicted me. 107. I am afflicted very much; quicken me, O Lord, according unto thy word.

CXXVI. 5. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. 6. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

PROVERBS.

III. 11. My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of his correction. 12. For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.

XIV. 10. The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.

XXIV. 10. If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.

ECCLESIASTES.

VII. 3. Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better. 14. In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider.

ISAIAH.

XXVI. 19. Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

XXVII. 9. By this, therefore, shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit to take away his sin.

XXXV. 10. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

XL. 6. The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. 7. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. 8. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

XLIX. 13. Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted. 14. But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. 15. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. 16. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.

L. 10. Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.

LI. 11. Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be on their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away. 12. I, even I, am he that comforteth you: Who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass?

LIV. 5. For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called. 6. For the Lord hath

called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit.

LX. 20. The days of thy mourning shall be ended.

LXI. 1. The Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; 2. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; 3. To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.

LXIII. 9. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

LXVI. 13. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.

JEREMIAH.

XXXI. 12. Their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all. . . . . 13. I will turn their mourning into joy,

and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow. 15. Thus saith the Lord; a voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted, because they were not. 16. Thus saith the Lord; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy.

XLIX. 11. Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me.

LAMENTATIONS.

III. 31. For the Lord will not cast off for ever: 32. But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. 33. For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.

EZEKIEL.

XXXI. 15. Thus saith the Lord God; In the day when he went down to the grave I caused a mourning: I covered the deep for him, and I restrained the floods thereof, and the great waters were stayed: and I caused Lebanon to mourn for him, and all the trees of the field fainted for him.

XXXIV. 14. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. 15. I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down saith the Lord God. 16. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick.

XXXVII. 1. The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, 2. And caused me to pass by them round about; and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. 3. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest. 4. Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. 5. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: 6. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord.

DANIEL.

XII. 2. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. 3. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

HOSEA.

VI. 1. Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. 2. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.

XIII. 14. I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction.

XIV. 3. In thee the fatherless find mercy.

AMOS.

IV. 11. I have overthrown some of you; . . . . . yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. 12. Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.

JONAH.

I. 14. Thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee.

II. 7. When my soul fainted within me I remembered the Lord: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple.

MICAH.

VI. 9. Hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it.

NAHUM.

I. 7. The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.

ZECHARIAH.

I. 3. Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Turn ye unto me, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord of hosts.

IX. 12. Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee.

XII. 10. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only

son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

XIII. 9. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God.

MALACHI.

III. 17. They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels.

ST. MATTHEW.

V. 4. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

VI. 10. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. 19. Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

VII. 25. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that

house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

XIII. 43. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

XVIII. 10. Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

XXVI. 39. And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

XXVII. 52. And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, 53. And came out of the graves after his resurrection.

ST. LUKE.

VII. 11. And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people. 12. Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. 13. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. 14. And he came and

touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. 15. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.

XVIII. 16. Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

XXI. 19. In your patience possess ye your souls.

XXIV. 5. Why seek ye the living among the dead?

ST. JOHN.

V. 25. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. 28. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, 29. And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life.

VI. 39. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

XI. 25. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though

he were dead, yet shall he live: 26. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. 33. When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, 34. And said, Where have ye laid him? They say unto him, Lord, come and see. 35. Jesus wept. 36. Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!

XIV. 1. Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. 28. Ye have heard how I said, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.

XVI. 20. Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. 33. These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

XVII. 24. Father, I will that they also, whom

thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

ACTS.

XIV. 22. We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

ROMANS.

VIII. 28. We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 35. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 38. I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39. Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

XII. 12. Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer.

1 CORINTHIANS.

VII. 29. But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; 30. And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; 21. And they that use this world, as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away.

XV. 51. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 55. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

2 CORINTHIANS.

I. 3. Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the

God of all comfort; 4. Who comforteth us in all our tribulation. . . . . 5. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.

EPHESIANS.

I. 11. Who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

III. 14. For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15. Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.

VI. 10. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

PHILIPPIANS.

IV. 11. I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

1 THESSALONIANS.

III. 3. That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.

IV. 13. But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

14. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

1 TIMOTHY.

VI. 7. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

2 TIMOTHY.

II. 11. It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him.

HEBREWS.

VI. 12. That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

XI. 13. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 16. God hath prepared for them a city.

JAMES.

I. 2. My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; 3. Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. 12. Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

V. 10. Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. 11. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy. 13. Is any among you afflicted? let him pray.

REVELATION.

VI. 9. And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were

slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: 10. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

VII. 6 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; 10. And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. 11. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, 12. Saying, Amen: Blessing and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. 13. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? 14. And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he

that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. 16. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. 17. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

XIV. 1. And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. 2. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: 3. And they sung as it were a new song before the throne. . . . . 4. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. 5. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God. 13. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

XXII. 1. And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the

throne of God and of the Lamb. 2. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: 4. And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. 5 And there shall be no night there: and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

PART V.

ON THE LOSS OF FRIENDS.

No. 2.

Selection of Extracts from Various Authors.

ACTS XX. 32.

And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

HEBREWS XII. 7.

If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons. We should patiently and with thanksgiving bear our heavenly Father's correction..

REVELATION XIV. 13.

I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

PART V.

On the Loss of Friends.

No. 2.

SELECTION OF EXTRACTS FROM VARIOUS AUTHORS.

The faithfulness of God is engaged to support, comfort, and assist us, and finally give us a happy issue out of every trial. He is a very present help in trouble. We cannot always enjoy the soothing accents of the voice of friendship, but our Almighty Friend is always with us: during the sleepless night and restless day, his presence is our stay. When deprived of earthly comforts, when the mind rests with gloomy delight on the painful and dreary solitude with which it is encompassed, then God is nigh; *He* kindly proffers his support; He can make the wilderness to blossom as the rose, and the heart of the widow to sing for joy.

A thousand circumstances may interrupt the

communion of friendship upon earth; but God is not like corruptible man, He is omnipotent and unchangeable; He knows not the shadow of turning; He is a Friend that loveth at all times. Do we require sympathy, He feels for us; He knows what sore temptations mean; He is acquainted with the feebleness of our nature, and affords support; He is ever present, hears our complaints, and has engaged to send us answers of peace. Do we need consolation, He is able and willing to save; He can bind up the broken-hearted, can heal the troubled bosom, and restore peace to the anxious breast. Do we require instruction and direction along the stormy way, He has promised to guide and protect us, and offers His Word as a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path. He has said, "Let not your hearts be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." How urgent a motive to be still in the hour of darkness, and to wait for the peace and the deliverance which he has promised in his own time; assured of our inviolable security, if we put our trust in Him who is our refuge and strength; a "strength to the needy in his distress; a refuge from the storm; a shadow from the heat." He will swallow up death in victory, and the Lord God "will wipe away tears from off all faces." And "It shall be said in that

day, Lo, this is our God: we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord, we have waited for Him; we will be glad, and rejoice in His salvation." W. NEWNHAM.

ECCLES. VII. 14.—In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider.

IN the day of adversity we are called to serious consideration on many accounts. Without this we are in danger of allowing God's dispensations towards us to pass away unimproved, and of forfeiting the precious benefits they are designed to confer.

In all His dispensations, God has a regard to our rational nature, and addresses Himself to the thinking principle within us; and it is not till that principle has been awakened into lively exercise, and directed to Scriptural views of divine truth, that we can either expect to enjoy solid comfort under affliction, or to be sanctified by means of it. It is only to them that are exercised thereby that it becomes "the means of producing the peaceable fruits of righteousness." Worldly men contrive to frustrate the beneficial design of affliction in their own case, and seek to obliterate from the hearts of their friends the impression which it is fitted to produce. They have recourse to business, to society, to change of scene, to frivolous amuse-

ments, with the avowed purpose of diverting their thoughts from affliction, which they cannot endure to think of with calm deliberation; and they are ever ready to prescribe to others the only remedy which they have tried for themselves. But should this advice be tendered to any of Christ's disciples, we beg him to remember that he has a remedy provided for him, of which the worldly man knows nothing—a remedy whose efficacy depends not on affliction being forgotten, but on its being duly considered—a remedy which, so far from requiring a diversion of thought as essential to our comfort, acts through the medium of thought, and makes affliction itself subservient to our good. Adversity is a serious thing; it calls for solemn consideration. It never can be improved or endured as it ought, unless we think of it, and learn the lesson which it affords. View it n whatever light you please, consider it as a trial fitted to exercise your minds; or as a discipline designed to improve them; or as a chastisement for past transgression; or as a preparation for future duty; in every aspect in which it can be contemplated it claims a thoughtful consideration; and if this be refused it will harden the heart, and all the more if it be superseded by the cares and pleasures of the world. In the day of adversity you should consider

from whose hand it has been sent to you. It comes direct from the hand of God. Intermediate agencies may have been employed in inflicting it; a chilling wind may have been the messenger of the disease; but through whatever secondary agency it may have been conveyed, adversity comes from the hand of God. "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." (Isaiah xlv. 7.) "Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?" (Lam. iii. 39.) "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" (Job ii. 10.) In the day of adversity you should consider the causes and occasions of suffering in general. All suffering is designed to mark His holy displeasure against sin, and to vindicate the honour of that law which God, as the righteous Governor of the world, has prescribed for the regulation of our hearts and lives. But for sin there would be no affliction in the world, no painful disease, no abject poverty, no death. But in the day of adversity the Christian disciple should also inquire into the special reasons that may exist in his past life, or in the present condition of his own soul, for God's dispensations towards him. He should consider "wherefore the Lord is thus contending with him;" what root of bitterness there

is still in his own heart, or what cause of offence in his life, which can have called for the providential warnings and chastisements with which he has been visited? and, if on making such an inquiry, he see cause to conclude that it is not now "with him as it was in months past, when the candle of the Lord shone on him," oh! let him acknowledge the seasonableness of God's interposition; His faithfulness in fulfilling His promise of needful discipline, and his own sinfulness in provoking the Lord to anger, even though he be one of His own adopted and forgiven children. Let us now turn our thoughts to the consideration of our remaining mercies, and have recourse to the practical use of those means of relief which God has graciously vouchsafed. Notwithstanding the severe stroke by which we have been visited, we are still surrounded with innumerable mercies, which are far, far beyond our deserts. Have we not still some few surviving friends who cling the more closely to us in proportion as their number is diminished, and who are still ready to weep with us when we weep, and to rejoice in our joy? Have we not still the Almighty providence of God to trust in, and His precious promises to refresh and gladden us? Have we not still in heaven a Great High Priest, a fellow-sufferer enthroned amidst the glories of the upper sanc-

tuary, who has a fellow-feeling with us in our trials, and the power of supporting or relieving us in them all? Have we not still, as His disciples, the same grounds of everlasting hope, the same assurance of pardon and peace, the same interest in His great salvation? Have we not still the presence of the Holy Spirit the Comforter, whose very office connects Him with the afflicted, and makes them the object of His peculiar care? And have we not access for ourselves to the mercy-seat, where, in the confidence of believing prayer, we may utter the fulness of our hearts in the presence of the God of all comfort? Let us not only consider our remaining temporal mercies, but with a grateful heart partake of them. Let us cleave to our Bible, which contains our glorious charter and security for time and eternity, nourishing our souls with divine truth, refreshing them with divine promises, invigorating and strengthening them with faith and patience. Let us not think of postponing consideration till a future hour; but laying to heart the trials which we have already experienced, let us seek so to improve them now, while reason is yet clear and strong, as that, whatever may befall us hereafter, we may have good ground to rejoice in the assurance that our souls are safe for eternity.

D. Buchanan.

Mourners in Zion, be comforted! If yours be a life of sorrow, yours is also a religion of hope. The Bible is filled with consolation and peace; and the more stormy your passage through this world, the more severe your trials and bereavements may be, the more should that blessed book be endeared to your hearts; of which every true disciple will say with the afflicted Psalmist, "*This* is my comfort in mine affliction." It is not one of the least benefits of severe affliction that it shatters our confidence in every other stay, and breaks up our hopes from every other quarter, and leads us in simplicity to search the Word of God for comfort; nor is it one of the least recommendations of that precious book that its characters become more bright in proportion as all else around us is dark. Glorious peculiarity! other books may amuse the hours of ease; other knowledge may suffice to pass the short day of prosperity; but this Book only is for the hour of sorrow; this knowledge comes to my aid when all other knowledge fails; and, like the stars of heaven, the truths of God shine most brightly in the darkest night of sorrow. While the Bible spreads out to our view the whole scene of human life, chequered with every variety of shade, it raises our eye above it, and reveals a superhuman and spiritual system, which stretches over and comprehends every part

of it—a system founded on principles which are as fixed as the incidents of human life are fluctuating—a system which overrules every event that may happen, and determines them all, however casual they may seem to be, to some great and lofty end. It is by revealing this spiritual system that the Bible seeks to elevate our minds out of the depression which the present aspects of the world might occasion; not by concealing the dark aspect of "things seen and temporal," but by bringing into view along with them, the glory of "things unseen and eternal;" not by disputing the reality of those afflictions which we feel, and underrating their magnitude, but by shewing us their necessity and suitableness, as means under a higher economy than that of the present life—an economy which stretches from eternity to eternity—which comprehends in its course all orders of creatures, and every class of events, and which controls and overrules them all for the promotion of an end worthy of the magnitude of the scheme, and infinitely important to ourselves.

D. Buchanan.

Has affliction fallen upon you? Say first, "It is the Lord. Let Him do what seemeth Him good. It is the Lord; and with Him are infinite wisdom,

power, and love; therefore He best—nay, He alone—knows what to do for and with me." We are in danger at such times of looking away from Him, and thinking only of second causes, greatly disquieting ourselves by doing so. We reflect with bitter anguish but that for some untoward circumstance, some precaution neglected, some one little thing done or left undone, all might now be well with us. Vain thoughts, which yet perseveringly return to haunt us; surely most vain; for it is the good and merciful Lord who has appointed this trial; and He might as easily have brought it about in any one of a thousand other ways. It is the Lord. And remember how in the night-storm on the sea, when the disciples' hearts failed them for fear of that dim, mysterious form which drew near, half hidden by the darkness, the voice of their Master spoke instant peace: "It is I, be not afraid." If you, indeed, know who it is that cometh to you upon the waves of these afflictions, amidst the darkness of this trial, you will not be dismayed.

T. V. Fosbery.

A oneness of will with our Father in Heaven reconciles us to whatever is *His* appointment. Our will is engaged to Him, and will is all. It is, as a great writer expresses himself, "the under-

standing of the heart." It would not change, if it could by a word, any thing that God has appointed. We glorify God in trouble when we practically acknowledge His wisdom and goodness by deep and tranquil submission to the infliction, whatever may be its nature and degree. He can never err in the time, the place, the instrument, or the nature of the stroke. From whatever hand it is dealt, the Christian reads its commission, and sees God in all—sees written equally on all his trials, "It is the Lord." ANON.

NUMBERLESS circumstances, each perhaps small in itself, but full of meaning, will combine to shew you that you are not forsaken in this time of trial. Many of God's promises too, will now seem as if they had been written especially for your consolation. Some will assure you of His presence during affliction, others will direct you to the true source of strength; some will remind you of the parental character of God, others will suggest that your condition as his child, because it is so full of blessings, involves the necessity of enduring His needful discipline. Your most earnest desire will be to gain from this trial all the good which it is meant to convey. God forbid that it should pass away without having accomplished its purpose; for such

visitations of affliction never leave any man exactly where he was before. Either they advance him on his heavenward way, teach him to live above the world, and nerve him for his daily conflicts; or else render his condition less hopeful than before. The holiest and best are, through God's grace, made better by them; to many, alas! they are but occasions of still further alienation from God. Cultivate, then, habits of devotion, so essential to the health and peace of your soul. Let no other duties interfere with those which call you into His holy presence. Pray much and earnestly that He would graciously sanctify this His fatherly correction to you, that while you live, "you may live to Him," and be an instrument of His glory by serving Him faithfully, and doing good in your generation, that He may Himself be "your defence, and make you know and feel that there is none other name under heaven given to man in whom, and through whom, you may receive health and salvation, but only the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

T. V. Fosbery.

ON RESIGNATION TO THE WILL OF GOD UNDER TRIALS.

In all our earthly trials let us only remember that it is according to the will of God. The believing

soul, subjected, and levelled to that will, complying with His good pleasure in all, cannot have a more powerful persuasive than this, that all is ordered by His will. This settled in the heart, would settle it much and make it even in all things; not only to know, but wisely and deeply to consider that it is thus, that all is measured in heaven, every drachm of thy troubles weighed by that skilful Hand, which doth all things by weight, number, and measure. And then consider Him as thy God and Father, who hath taken special charge of thee and of thy soul: thou hast given it to Him, and He hath received it. And upon this consideration study to follow His will in all, to have no will but His. This is thy duty and thy wisdom. Nothing is gained by struggling, but to hurt and vex thyself; but by complying, all is gained—sweet peace. It is the very secret, the mystery of solid peace within, to resign all to His will, to be disposed of at His pleasure without the least contrary thought. And thus, like two-faced pictures, those sufferings and troubles, and whatsoever else, while beheld on the one side as painful to the flesh, hath an unpleasant visage, yet go about a little, and look upon it as thy Father's will, and then it is smiling, beautiful, and lovely. This I would recommend to you not only for temporals, as easier there, but in spiritual

things, your comforts and sensible enlargements—to love all that He does. It is the sum of Christianity, to have thy will crucified, and the will of thy Lord thy only desire. Whether joy or sorrow, sickness or health, life or death, in all, *Thy will be done.* Seeing also that your reproaches and sufferings are not endless, yea, that they are short, they shall end, quickly end, and end in glory; be not troubled about them, overlook them. The eye of faith will do it. A moment gone, and what are they? This is the great cause of our disquietness in troubles and griefs. We forget their end. We are affected by our condition in this present world, as if it were all, and it is nothing. Oh, how quickly shall all the enjoyments, and all the sufferings of this life pass away, and be as if they had not been.

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON.

IN all troubles and sadder accidents let us take sanctuary in religion, and by innocence cast out anchors for our souls to keep them from shipwreck, though they be not kept from storm. "We are troubled on every side, but not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" The greatest evils are from

within us; and from ourselves also we must look for our greatest good; for God is the fountain of it, but reaches it to us by our own hands; and when all things look sadly round about us, then only we shall find how excellent a fortune it is to have God to our friend; and, of all friendship, that only is created to support us in our needs.

JEREMY TAYLOR.

CHRIST HAS CONSECRATED TO US THE WAY OF SUFFERING.

THE Lord Christ, being consecrated and perfected through sufferings, has consecrated the way of suffering for all who follow Him in their march to glory. All complaints of sufferings, all despondencies under them, all fears of them in prospect, are rendered unjust and unreasonable by the sufferings of Christ; and the Gospel is full of warnings and instructions to this purpose. Men may deceive themselves, or others, with vain hopes and expectations, but the Gospel deceives none; it tells them plainly before hand, that through mu h tribulation they must enter into the kingdom of God. But we would be children, and not chastised; we would be gold, and not tried; we would overcome, and not be put to fight and contend; we would be

Christians, and not suffer! But all these things are contrary to the irrevocable law of our profession. DR. OWEN.

SUBMISSION AND RESIGNATION.

THOSE trials which come from God are never without benefit to us when we receive them worthily; since there is always a rich harvest of spiritual blessings for the afflicted religious heart. If human nature at first shrinks from sorrow, faith and Christian hope soon comes to its support; the trial then appears easy to be borne; receive it as from God, and its bitterness is past. In His own good time He will send His consolations, such as shall speak comfort to your soul, strengthen your hope in Him, and confirm your submission to His decrees. It is the dependence of a child upon its parent which God requires from us. He is our Heavenly Father, and He dispenses to us our trials, as a parent appoints a task to his children. He does not overwhelm us with too much burden at once. It is our duty to accept whatever God thinks fit to send us, notwithstanding our natural repugnance to it; we must receive it as coming from Him for an exercise of our faith, and a test of our allegiance. When we are exempt from worldly

sorrows and afflictions, let us humbly and gratefully offer up our thanks to God; and when they come upon us, let us patiently and submissively receive them as becomes the disciples of Jesus Christ. We are too apt to accuse Providence when any great affliction falls upon us; we rebel against the will of Heaven, forgetting that by temporal calamities God recalls us to Himself. We should then pray to Him not to deliver us from our sufferings, but since it is His will that we should suffer, that He would be pleased to sanctify our afflictions to us, and give us patience and strength under them. Therefore, when we mourn with inward sorrow, or smart under pain, let us bend our souls, and offer up our sufferings before the mercy-seat of God. We suffer, but we are content to suffer, because it is the will of God. This perfect acquiescence in His will, founded on the conviction of His wisdom and goodness in all that he appoints us, can alone disarm misfortune of its sting, and heal our deepest wounds. Happy is that soul which places its hope and confidence in God, and with humility accepts from His hands both good and evil. Let us, then, rest our wounded hearts upon our merciful God, and we shall be comforted, and enabled to endure whatever may be our lot in this passing scene.

FENELON.

The mercies of God are, indeed, infinitely more numerous than we deserve. We receive ten thousand mercies for one trial. Every hour, every moment, is full of God's goodness, so that the believer can say, how precious are Thy thoughts unto me, O God! How great is the sum of them! "If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand." And, indeed, afflictions rightly viewed and received are truly to be reckoned among those precious thoughts of God's love to us.

FENELON.

SURELY there is abundant comfort to a Christian in the thought, that "affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground," but comes from that Hand from which he has received all his blessings, that Hand which has guided and guarded him, with such ceaseless care, all his life long. It is this habit of viewing the hand of God, as a loving Father's hand, appointing all their afflictions as tokens of His love, which has enabled His children, in every age, to bear their heaviest trials with submissive patience and cheerfulness, yea, even thankful acquiescence in their heavenly Father's will. When Samuel had communicated to Eli the appalling intelligence of the approaching destruction of his family, what is the

reflection that sustained the afflicted father's sinking heart under such a tremendous stroke? Hear it from himself: "It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth to Him good." Again, look at Job, the greatest of sufferers, but one, that ever was on earth. Messenger hurries in after messenger to tell him that all his property and all his children were swept away. What was the reflection that reconciled him to the sudden bereavement of all to which he had ever looked for happiness on earth, all in one hour of unexpected desolation, torn for ever from his eyes? "The Lord gave," says the patient sufferer, and (mark, not as the messengers reported, the plunderers from the desert, not the wind from the wilderness, but) "*the Lord hath taken away*, blessed be the name of the Lord!" We know but of one greater sufferer than Job; and what is the example left us by the greatest of all sufferers that earth ever saw? What was the uniform language in which He breathed forth the spirit of patient resignation amidst all the accumulated woes which continually pressed upon his afflicted soul? "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? Even so, Father; for so it seemeth good in Thy sight." "O my Father! if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, Thy will be done." Now it is by neglecting to

follow the example thus set us by the saints of the Lord, and the Lord of saints Himself, that under the pressure of severe affliction our souls are so often cast down, and our spirits disquieted within us; and we indulge, if not in the language of fretfulness or repining, at least in the feeling of despondency or discontent. We look too exclusively at second causes, and overlook the great First Cause, which appoints and arranges all according to the counsel of His own will. We fasten our eyes on the instrument employed to chasten us, and forget the hand which wields that instrumentality, only to effect the purposes of His everlasting love. Perhaps the sorest of earthly sorrows is allotted to us; the desire of our eyes, the delight of our heart, has been taken from us. The grave has closed over the objects that were the loved companions and comforters of our earthly pilgrimage, that used so gladly to rejoice with us when we did rejoice, so tenderly to weep with us when we wept; and we feel a sickening sense of desolation come over us; and are too prone, like the disconsolate mourner of old, to refuse to be comforted. And why is all this? We allow ourselves to be absorbed in excessive sorrow for our withered gourds, because we dwell too deeply on the harrowing remembrance how we used to delight to rest

under their shadow; and how, as we rested there, our heart seemed full of happiness even to overflowing; and when these recollections rush over our spirits, we are ready to repine, and to complain, and even to feel angry, that our gourd is withered; and we forget that we do not well to be angry for the gourd; because it was God who prepared the worm that withered it—and surely we do not well to be angry with our God! Since He sent the worm to wither the gourd, not in wrath, but in love—not to leave our defenceless heads unsheltered from the scorching sun, or blighting storm, but to lead us to abide, in safer and sweeter peace, under the everlasting shadow of His wings, who is to all His afflicted people, amidst all their sorrows, "as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." May we, then, be enabled to say, "Even so, Father, for so it hath seemed good in Thy sight; and oh, in Thy mercy forbid, and by Thy grace prevent, that what seemeth good in Thy sight should ever seem evil in ours."

Prayer and Praise bring with them the comforts of heaven, to revive and enrich our weary and barren spirits in the gloomy seasons of sorrow, like the dew descending on the green pastures.

He that neglects prayer, is a despiser of the pro-

mises annexed to the performance of the duty, and the high privilege of communion with God, who hath said, "Call upon me, and I will deliver thee;" "Ask and ye shall receive.". . . . . Oh, then, let us fervently pray that we may not seek our only and chief supplies from worldly springs, resorting to them only as casual refreshments by the way, but from God: from God *alone* thankfully receive that living water, which will so abundantly satisfy us, that we shall never again thirst for any beside. . . . Everything here below is mutable; but whatever belongs to the Christian believer is everlasting. God the unchanging God, who is his portion; the faithful covenant, which is his security; and heaven, which is his inheritance—these can suffer no alteration. If we have these blessings imparted to us (and they are graciously offered to every one), we may well say, "This is all my salvation, and all my desire." Oh, if we are thus blessed with a sense of the favour of our Creator, we shall, under the severest trials, enjoy a peace unruffled as the repose of heaven.

OUR SIN IN LOOKING TO SECOND CAUSES IN AFFLICTION.

THE Shunammitess, when she answered, "It is well" (2 Kings iv. 26), wholly looks over all second

causes, and goes directly to the first. God hath done it, all events are appointed and ordered by Him. "My times," says the Psalmist, "are in thine hands" (Ps. xxxi. 15). All that concerns me thou hast the care of, and thou wilt perform it. "It is well;" that is the only reconciling principle under the severest trials, and even under lighter strokes, mere casualties as they appear to us, the soul can have no rest till he issues his concern here. I have known little insignificancies very vexing and grieving, and the more so, because one thinks how easily they might have been prevented. But the best way to quiet the soul is to eye God's hand. "I was dumb," says the Psalmist; "I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it" (Ps. xxxix. 9).

The wisdom of God is much seen in the choice of His rods. It is usual with God to smite us in those very comforts which stole away too much of the love and delight of our souls from Him, to cross us in those things from which we raised up too great expectations of comfort. These providences bespeak the jealousy of God over us, and His care to prevent far worse evils by these sad, but needful strokes. It is a good sign our troubles are sanctified to us when they turn our heart against sin,

and not against God. It is a sure sign that afflicting providences are sanctified when they purge the heart from sin, and leave both heart and life more pure, heavenly, mortified, and humble, than they found him. How many Christians can bear witness to this truth. After some sharp affliction has been upon them, how is the earthliness of their hearts purged. Oh, how serious, humble, and heavenly are they till the impression made upon them by afflictions is worn off, and their deceitful hearts have again entangled them. It is a good sign that afflicting providences are sanctified to us when we draw near to God under them, and turn to Him that smites us. We may call our afflictions sanctified when divine teachings accompany them to our souls. Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law. Oh, it is a blessed sign, then, that trouble is sanctified, which makes a man thus turn in upon his own heart, search it, and humble himself before the Lord for the evils of it. FLAVEL.

ON AFFLICTION.

AFFLICTIONS fall not out by casualty, but by counsel (Job v. 6); according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will (Eph. i. 11). By this counsel of God they

are ordained as means of much spiritual good; by this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged (Isaiah xxvii. 9); and it will be for our profit, that we might be partakers of Christ's holiness (Heb. xii. 10). All things work together for good. It is good for me that I have been afflicted (Psalm cxix. 71), and it is my ignorance of God's design that makes me quarrel with Him. He saith to me in this case, as to Peter, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter (John xiii. 7). It is of marvellous efficacy to keep the heart from sinking under afflictions; to call to mind that thine own Father hath the ordering of them: not a creature moves hand or tongue against thee, but by His permission. Suppose the cup be a bitter cup, yet it is the cup which thy Father hath given thee to drink; and canst thou suspect poison to be in that cup which He delivers thee? If thou being evil, knowest how to give good gifts to thy children, how much more doth God? (Matt. vii. 11.) . . . . . Look upon all creatures as in the hand of God, who manages them in all their motions, limiting, restraining, and determining them all at His pleasure. Get this truth well settled by faith in your hearts; it will marvellously guard them from all slavish fears. The first chapter of Ezekiel contains an admirable scheme of Providence. There

you may see the living creatures who move the wheels, viz., the great affairs and turnings of things here below coming unto Christ, who sits upon the throne, to receive new orders and instructions from Him (verses 24—26): and in Rev. vi. you read of white, black, and red horses, which are nothing else but the instruments which God employs in executing judgements in the world, as wars, pestilence, and death. Here is what may quiet your hearts, that God hath the reins in his hands. Exercise, then, holy *trust* in times of great distress. Make it your business to trust God with your lives and comforts, and then your hearts will be at rest about them; so did David (Ps. lvi. 3), "At what time I am afraid, I will trust in thee;" see also Isaiah xxvi. 3, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." The poor leaveth himself with Thee; and doth his God fail Him? No, "Thou art the helper of the Fatherless" (Ps. x. 14); that is, thou art the helper of the destitute one that hath none to go to but God. And that is a sweet Scripture, "He shall not be afraid of evil tidings; his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord" (Ps. cxii. 7); he may hear as sad tidings as other men, but his heart shall be privileged from the terror of those tidings; his heart is fixed. FLAVEL.

THOSE graces that would possibly grow heavy and unwieldy by too much ease, are held in breath, and increase their activity and strength by conflict. Divine grace, even in the heart of weak and sinful man, is an invincible thing. Drown it in the waters of adversity, it rises more beautiful, as not being drowned indeed, but only washed; throw it into the furnace of fiery trials, it comes out purer, and loses nothing but the dross which our corrupt nature mixes with it. Thus the Apostle here expounds the *if need be* (1 Peter i. 6), and so justifies the joy in afflictions which there he speaks of by their utility, and the advantage faith derives from them; it is so tried that it shall appear in its full brightness at the revelation of Jesus Christ. LEIGHTON.

LET us learn to put a right construction on all God's dealings with our souls, especially in our seasons of affliction. Let us not be hasty. Let us take God's work together, and not judge of it by parcels. It is, indeed, all wisdom and righteousness; but we shall best discern the beauty of it when we look on it in the frame, when it shall be fully completed and finished, and our eyes enlightened to take a fuller and clearer view of it than we can have here. Oh, what gratitude, what wonder, it will then com-

mand! We read of Joseph, hated, and sold, and imprisoned, and all most unjustly; yet, because, within a leaf or two we find him freed and exalted, and his brethren coming as supplicants to him, we are satisfied. But when we look on things which are for the present cloudy and dark, our short-sighted, hasty spirits cannot learn to wait a little till we see the other side, and what end the Lord makes. LEIGHTON.

1 COR. XV. 20.—Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

ST. PAUL'S First Epistle to the Corinthians opens with the verse selected for the text, and extends to the conclusion of the chapter. It is a portion of Scripture in the highest degree interesting, on account of the momentous truths which it discloses; and it is rendered peculiarly impressive by the solemn and affecting nature of the occasions on which it is publicly employed. It is a portion of Scripture which we have frequently heard pronounced over the lifeless bodies of our friends. It is one which others, within no distant period, shall hear pronounced over our own. The Church to which we belong has wisely endeavoured to render the interment of the dead a source of edification to

the living. When pride is humbled, and the heart softened by affliction; when the coffin, slowly borne to the house of God, pausing there awhile on its way to the grave, or placed within its narrow mansion, and receiving the last looks of sorrowing friends, proclaims with a voice that cannot be misunderstood, the speedy and inevitable end of all earthly possessions and enjoyments: the mourner is taught to look to Christ the Redeemer, the resurrection and the life, in whom whomsoever believeth, though he were dead, yet shall he live. He is taught that if the Lord has taken away, he has taken only what he gave. He is taught that though man walketh in a vain shadow, yet his hope is truly in the Lord. He is taught that if God turneth man to destruction, again he saith, "Come again, ye children of men." He is taught that a voice from heaven hath proclaimed, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord: even so, saith the Spirit: for they rest from their labours." He is taught not to sorrow as man without hope for them who sleep in Christ. He is taught that the souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are with Christ in joy and felicity. He is taught, that though earth be committed to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust, it is in sure and certain hope of the resurrection of the just to eternal

life, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be like his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things to Himself; and shall then pronounce that benediction to all that love and fear God, "Come, ye blessed children of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world."

GISBORNE.

LET us remember, that through many trials God rears up His family to future blessedness; and there is no better recommendation to His favour than resignation and acquiescence under all His dispensations. If we patiently endure this rough and wintry season of calamity, we are encouraged to expect that in the end we shall be counted worthy of enjoying a purer and serener climate. While we bend our steps towards heaven, let us not repine at the hardships of the way, nor at the roughness of the passage. Here dwell pain and danger, with their troublesome and numerous attendants; but there sorrow and sighing shall fly away; all tears shall be wiped from our eyes, and joy spring up eternal in our souls. Here we are in a strange country, absent from our native land there we shall find our proper home and all our happiness,

and thither our Saviour and our best friends have gone before us. These have shown us how to behave while on our journey to join them; shall not they inspire us with resolution and patience amidst all the dangers and sufferings through which we have to pass, and which are not to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed to us? Let us, therefore, pray to God that He would impress this blessed desire and hope upon our minds. Then, though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, we shall fear no evil; for God shall be our conductor and deliverer; then shall we bid defiance to the fiercest assaults of our enemies, for we know that though worms destroy this body, yet in our flesh shall we see God: this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality. Let us, then, lay aside every weight, that we may without wearying run the race that is set before us, and in due time obtain the prize we so earnestly desire. DRYSDALE.

THE WORD OF GOD OUR COMFORT IN AFFLICTION.

WE may assert that there cannot be imagined, much less found, the darkness, in passing through which there is no promise in Scripture by which

you may be cheered. Let us take the case of most frequent occurrence, but of which frequency diminishes nothing of the bitterness—we mean the case of the loss of friends; the case in which death makes way into a family, and carries off one of the most beloved of its members. It is night, deep night, in a household whenever this occurs. When the loss is of another kind it may admit of repair. Property may be injured; some cherished plan be frustrated; but industry may be again successful, and hope may fix its eye on other objects; but when those whom we love best die, there is no comfort of this sort with which we can be comforted. For a time, at least, the loss seems irreparable; and while the calamity is fresh, we repulse, as injurious, the thought that the void in our affections can ever be filled, and are persuaded that the blank in the domestic group can be occupied by nothing but the hallowed memory of the buried. It is, therefore, night in the household—darkness, a darkness that may be felt; and philosophy comes in with its well meant, but idle, endeavours to console those who sit in this darkness. It can speak of the unavoidableness of death, of the duty of bearing with manly fortitude what cannot be escaped, of the injuriousness of excessive grief, and it may even hazard a conjecture of re-union in some world beyond the

grave. And pleasure approaches, with its allurements and fascinations, offering to cheat the mind into forgetfulness, and wile the heart from its sadness. But neither philosophy nor pleasure can avail anything in the chamber of death. The taper of the one is too faint for so oppressive a gloom: and the torch of the other burns sickly in so unwonted an atmosphere. Is, then, the darkness such that those whom it envelopes are incapable of being comforted? Oh! not so. There may be those amongst yourselves who can testify, that even in a night so dreary and desolate there is a source whence consolation may be drawn. The promises of Scripture are never more strikingly fulfilled than when death has made an inroad, and taken away at a stroke some object of love. Indeed, it is God's own word to the believer, "I will be with him in trouble;" as though the presence which can never be withdrawn then became more real and intense. Let us, then, place our faith and trust in the promises of that God who is the husband of the widow, and the father of the fatherless; this can cause the sorrowing to be glad in the midst of their sorrow; and every believer will confess, borne out by experience, that God, our Maker, "giveth songs in the night."

Rev. Henry Melvill.

AFFLICTIONS.

UNDER the equitable Master whom we serve, we do not suffer a single affliction that has not for its foundation either his justice, which corrects us for even the most secret of our sins, or his mercy, which thus prevents the faults into which we might otherwise fall. There is not one, therefore, which is not either a just chastisement, or a salutary ordeal. If, then, we consider ourselves as a family of Christians, we shall see what solid grounds of consolation remain to us in whatever troubles we may be visited with; nor have we any right to complain of the present life, since it is only the apprenticeship to one more durable. We make use of the good things it may present to us, but yet as strangers who are not going to tarry; and we profit by the evils we may be obliged to undergo, by regarding them either as purifications or corrections. Such are the resources of the suffering Christian; but when the infidel suffers, it is without benefit and without consolation. ST. AUGUSTINE.

THE CHRISTIAN HAPPY IN TRIBULATION.

WHAT trouble, indeed, can overwhelm, what fear can discompose, that man who loveth Christ and

keepeth his words? What earthly power can make such a man unhappy? Will you take away his riches? His treasure is in heaven. Will you banish him from home? His country is above. Will you destroy his body? His body shall be raised incorruptible at the last day, and his soul will immediately return unto God who gave it. Heaven itself is but an emblem of his happiness. As heaven is enlightened by the rising sun, his soul is illuminated by the Sun of Righteousness, which ariseth, without setting, in his heart. As heaven is intrinsically bright and beautiful, though clouds obscure, and midnight darkness surround it, he is peaceful, serene, and happy, in the midst of trials and afflictions. As heaven is exalted above the storms and tempests of the lower atmosphere, he is elevated above the distractions and perturbations of this troublesome world. He is a Christian. His conversation is in heaven; his life is hid with Christ in God. We admit, then, that such a Christian has his sorrows; but his sorrow is sweeter than this world's joy. Every trial, every affliction, draws him nearer to his God. In the secrecy of his chamber, in the silence of midnight, he has a resource which the world knows not of. He pours forth his fears, his apprehensions, his griefs, into the bosom of his Maker. Suffering thus becomes a

well-spring of delight, for it is felt to be a source of spiritual improvement. Thus it is that all things work together, not only for good, but for enjoyment to them that love their God. Thus it is, that if they sow in tears, they also reap in joy.

BISHOP JEBB.

DEATH OF THE FAITHFUL.

WHAT admirable wisdom is shewn in the dispensations of the Almighty. He has sown the present life with tribulations to make us more sensible of the joys of the life to come. In creating us immortal, he has, nevertheless, taxed our immortality with death, but with only temporary death; a death which detains us only one moment under its dominion, that we may be affranchised from it, immediately after, for ever. No, there is no death for those who die in Christ; there is only sleep. For them death is the promised haven which affords them shelter from every storm. Can they, then, dread the arrival of that which for ever sets them free from sin, and all its cruel snares. O Lord! how can we bless Thee sufficiently for having given us thy death, as the pledge of our own immortal life; Thy resurrection as the earnest of that which Thou hast promised to ourselves. Let the sepulchre call us, we will wait in peace for the moment when

Thy powerful voice shall command our dust to rise, and join itself to immortal life, to celebrate Thy praises throughout eternity.

Affliction is so far from separating God from us, that it rather brings us to God, and God to us; for when we are weak then He is strong. He despises not our weak faith, nor rejects it, but cherishes, strengthens; and if we forsake not our own privileges, will at last crown it with a blessed conclusion. Mark the golden passages: "Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat" (Isaiah xxv. 4). "Strengthen ye the weak hands, confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold your God will come and save you" (Isaiah xxxv. 3, 4). "The Lord hath sent me to preach good tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, and to comfort all that mourn" (Isaiah lxi. 1). Seeing, then, that we have such great and precious promises of aid, strength, and consolation, let us meet every affliction in the spirit of patient and humble acquiescence; look up steadfastly to God, the everlasting fountain and giver of all goodness; and in every condition of soul and body learn to rejoice in Him alone.

ROM. v. 3.—And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also.

THE true Christian alone can glory in tribulation. Every one knows what tribulation is, for "man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward." But those only can glory in it on a right ground who have been "justified by faith;" they have learned to acquiesce with God in his plan; such an one has "peace with God, and access to Him by faith, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Observe what follows the text: "Knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope," &c. Are these things really so? The man who has justifying faith knows these things to be realities. The combats, conflicts, temptations, and trials, which the children of God pass through, not only produce patience, but gain experience; which is like the knowledge that a traveller gains in a long journey. It is a bundle of choice maxims, gathered by much pains, and the result of close observation. It is in the school of affliction that a man obtains the knowledge of his own heart. It is the plan of God to break our hard hearts, to pull down our high spirits, and to make us understand the language of David: "Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his

mother; my soul is even as a weaned child." Christians also glory in tribulation, because it brings them acquainted with the goodness and mercy of God, in holding them up in deep waters, in being with them as they pass through the fire of affliction. And this experience produces hope, which is as an anchor of the soul; a hope that we are the children of God, and savingly united to Christ; a hope of the glory of God; a hope that maketh not ashamed—that will bear us up when everything else fails; a hope which purifieth the heart. As Christians, we must prepare for walking through deep waters, and through the fire: yet, let us not be alarmed, but remember, that as we never can go through them in our own strength—as nothing but the arm of God can bear us up—so we are encouraged to "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." The hour of trouble is the time in which the Christian is taught to look up to God, not only to get help to bear it, but to be enabled also to glory in it. If our troubles be heavy, we should say with Jehoshaphat, "our eyes are upon Thee." There may be some who are now wading through the deep waters of affliction. Recollect that your circumstances are the very element for faith: it can walk through fire and water. This

is the time when you are called upon to "glory in tribulation," to the honour of His name, who says, "Fear not, I am with thee." Have you never prayed for more faith, more hope, more experience of the love of God shed abroad in your hearts? God's way of answering a believer's prayers for an increase of patience, experience, hope, and love, is frequently by putting him into the furnace of affliction. Therefore St. James says, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." Temporal enjoyments are often to the soul what suckers are to a tree. God often takes off those that this may thrive. People of the world count it all joy when they are in ease and affluence, when the sun of prosperity shines upon them; but a Christian is taught to count it all joy when he is tried like gold in the fire. This is one of God's lessons, and one of His *highest*. Learn to say, God hath done this for my good. The first Christians have trod this path. You are exhorted by St. Peter not to think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you. Pray to God that He may support you under it. St. Paul does not tell us what his thorn in the flesh was, but he tells us what he did with it: he carried it to Christ, and he found his grace sufficient for him. This is God's way of producing those graces spoken of in the chapter of the text, patience,

experience, hope, and the love of God, who corrects His children while He lets others go on their way. A Christian is disciplined for a higher employment; his eye is directed to Him who says, "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." "Him that cometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name" (Rev. iii. 12).

CECIL.

REMEMBER the answer which St. Paul received, "My grace is sufficient for thee;" as though God should say, I will not take away the thorn, but I will support you under it. Before St. Paul had received this comfortable answer in the text, the temptation in his flesh had taught him to pray; not merely to use a form of words, which is a very different thing, but it brought him as a destitute sinner to Christ, as able, and willing, and ready, to help. Though the prayer of faith is the great secret of a Christian, and it is in the prayerful use of means he may expect success, yet he may not be

answered to the letter of his prayers. The answer given to St. Paul was not in *kind*, but it was something better, it was in *kindness*. It was as though God should say, "My favour shall be exerted towards you, and my power shall put strength into you; my favour is better than life, and my power sufficient to support you under the trial. If I press you down with one hand, I will hold you up with the other. A Christian is a man, who, instead of living upon outward temporal things, is building upon the Rock of Ages, and therefore safe; for this is that from which nothing can separate him. This is what St. Paul triumphantly asks, in the eighth chapter to the Romans, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution?" No, nothing shall! it is eternal union. As Christ has taken hold of my hand, and I of His, He says to me all the way I travel on, "Fear not!" He will take away present perishable objects to give better things; to give his own "unsearchable riches." We want nothing but this; if we can enter into the spirit of the subject, and feel in sympathy with the text, we shall not be saying to this or that creature, come and comfort me; or asking, "Who will show me any good?" but we shall go to the all-sufficient God, who says, "My grace is to be your sufficiency."

With this grace, outward things cannot sink us; He can lift us above them all, whether painful or pleasant; nor can they afford us any real comfort if we have not this grace. CECIL.

PSALM L. 15.—Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.

"CALL upon me in the day of trouble;" you have a warrant to come at all times, but more especially in the time of trouble, which signifies, generally, a time of particular trial or visitation, like that of Job; or of suspense, like that of Moses, when the people wanted to turn back into Egypt; or a time when God seems to withdraw that help which He gave us reason to expect. Trouble is sometimes so sharp and secret that a man cannot ascribe it to any but God, like that of David (2 Sam. xii). When He fasted and prayed, and lay all night upon the earth, the people thought it was his sorrow for the child; but it was a complicated affair, there was guilt in the cup. "Call upon me in the day of trouble." Luther said he never understood the Book of Psalms till he was in trouble. There are troubles that none but God can help us under. The efforts of friends, in some cases, prove only an aggravation of grief. CECIL.

CHRIST IS THE BELIEVER'S COMFORT AND SECURITY IN THE HOUR OF TRIAL.

CHRIST is the keeper of all our concerns in this world of uncertainty and of sorrow. It is a consideration the most animating to the faith of the believer, that all power is committed into His hands, that He may give eternal life to His people; that exalted upon the throne in the nature of His brethren, He is the Head over all things for His Church. Not only are their individual concerns in His hand, but the whole world; its events, both great and small, are regulated by His wisdom as in subserviency to their God. His eyes run to and fro throughout all the earth, to show Himself strong in behalf of those that fear him. His attention to their common concerns is beautifully expressed by the Psalmist: Jehovah is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night; the Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; He shall preserve thy soul. Jehovah shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, even for evermore (Ps. cxxi. 5—8). While He hath the management of all things in providence, it might naturally be expected that the objects of His everlasting love, the redeemed with His blood, the subjects of His spiritual

grace, who are partakers of His Spirit, should not be neglected in His government, but obtain His peculiar attention; they might naturally expect that He who clothes the lilies, would much more clothe them; that He who feeds the birds of the air and the beasts of the field, would much more provide for His children; that if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground, nor a hair from the head, without the observation of the great Governor of all, their minutest concerns cannot be beneath His regard any more than the greatest beyond the limit of His infinite mind. With these views they might most reasonably quiet every anxious solicitude, and leave their concerns with Him (Matt. vi. 25—34; and Matt. x. 29, 39). But His faithful promises secure to them the particular regards of His providential care: His promises, indeed, are so great and extensive, that, if they were to be literally understood, we must suppose that no affliction or distress could ever rest upon His people. This, however, we know is not the case; this He has declared will not be the case in the present state, and yet His promise insures them that no evil shall befal them, no plague come nigh their dwelling; they need not be afraid for the terror by night, nor the arrow that flieth by day, nor the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the destruction that wasteth at

noonday; when a thousand fall at their side, and ten thousand at their right hand, it shall not come nigh them. (See that beautiful charter of Christian privileges in Ps. xci., and that delightful series of promises of help under, and deliverance from, all, in Ps. xxxiv.) But though these promises do not secure the deliverance of His people from all that we call evil, they must secure them from what He sees to be evil, and that all which He sends He will turn into a blessing. His wisdom, His knowledge, and His power, guided by His love, are ever employed in the direction of their concerns. His eye is ever upon them, and His ears attentive unto their prayers. Their business, their friends, their circumstances, their estate, and persons, yea, every event which shall happen to them, is under His especial superintendence, and guided by His sovereign pleasure. What an encouraging view is this in the present state of things! Faith may well reconcile the believer, and reconcile his mind to all the events of life. He need not be afraid of evil tidings when his heart is steadfast trusting in the Lord. If all events are the appointment of His providence, they cannot be wrong under such direction; and if ever they appear dark and inexplicable to us, this must arise from the weakness of our minds, the partial view which we take of His ways,

and our consequent ignorance of His present and ultimate design. In the mysterious dispensations of His providence, the people of His love may be both poor and afflicted; and the heirs of His kingdom may be tried in the furnace of affliction, and harassed by the temptations of the enemy; but since none of these things can take place without His appointment, it is most reasonable to conclude that there is a necessity for all, and a gracious design in all; while His promise assures them that all things shall work together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to His purpose. Why, then, should we doubt His goodness, or His love, any more than His wisdom and His power. Surely He is worthy of our confidence; such views as these call for our faith and quiet dependence; and in thus resting upon Him is the happiness of the Christian life (John xiv. 1, &c.; Phil. iv. 6, 7).

The furnace of affliction shews upright real faith to be such indeed, remaining, even in the fire, still the same that it was: as good gold loses none of its quantity in the fire. Doubtless many are deceived, in time of ease and prosperity, with imaginary faith and fortitude; so that there may be still some

doubt, while a man is underset with outward helps, as riches, friends, esteem, &c., whether he leans upon these, or upon God, who is an invisible support, though stronger than all that are visible, and is the peculiar and alone stay of faith in all conditions. But when all these outward props are plucked away from a man, then it will be manifest whether something else upholds him or not; for if there be nothing else, then he falls; but if his mind stands firm and unmoved as before, then it is evident he laid not his weight upon the things which he had then about him, but was built upon a foundation, though not seen, which is able alone to stay him, although he be not only frustrated of all other supports, but beaten upon with storms and tempests; as our Saviour says, the house fell not, because it was founded upon a rock (Matt. vii. 25). This testified the truth of David's faith, who found it stay his mind upon God when there was nothing else near that could do it: "I had fainted unless I had believed" (Psalm xxvii. 13). So in his strait 1 Sam. xxx. 6), where it is said that David was greatly distressed, but he encouraged himself in the Lord his God. Thus, Psalm lxxiii. 26, "My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." Thus, faith worketh alone, when the case suits that of the Pro-

phet's (Hab. iii. 17, 18); "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." LEIGHTON.

THEREFORE, rejoice now in the midst of all your sufferings. Stand upon the advanced ground of the promises and the covenant of grace, and by faith look beyond this moment and all that is in it, to that day wherein everlasting joy shall be upon your heads, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away (Isaiah li. 11). Believe in this day, and the victory is won. Oh! that blessed hope, well fixed and exercised, would give other manner of spirits. What zeal for God would it not inspire! What invincible courage against all encounters! How soon will this pageant of the world vanish that men are gazing on, these pictures and fancies of pleasure and honours, falsely so called, and give place to the real glory of the sons of God, when this blessed Son, who is God, shall be seen appearing full of majesty, and all His brethren in glory with Him. And if you ask, Who are they? Why, "these are they who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb" (Rev. vii. 14). LEIGHTON.

1 Peter iv. 12, 13.—Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

Oh! how much worth is it, and how doth it endear the heart to God, to have found Him sensibly present in the times of trouble, refreshing the soul with dews of spiritual comfort. One special advantage of these trials is, the purifying of a Christian's heart from the love of the world and of present things. It is true the world, at best, is base in respect of the high estate and hopes of a believer; yet, still, there is somewhat within him that would bend him downwards, and draw him to too much complacency in outward things, if they were much to his mind. Too kind usage might sometimes make him forget himself, and think himself at home, at least, so much as not to entertain those longings after home, and that progress homewards, that become him. It is good for us, certainly, to find hardship and contempts here, and to find them frequent, that we may not think them *strange*, but ourselves *strangers*, and may think it were strange for us to be other-

wise entertained. This keeps the affections more clear and disengaged, sets them upward. Thus the Lord makes the world displeasing to His own, that they may turn in to Him, and seek all their consolations in Himself. Acquaint, therefore, your thoughts and hearts with sufferings, that when they come, thou and they not being strangers, may agree and comply the better. Do not afflict yourselves with vain fears beforehand of troubles to come, and so make uncertain evils a certain vexation by advance. Things certainly fall the lighter on us when they fall first upon our thoughts. Therefore be still, humble and dependent on the strength of Christ, and seek to be previously furnished with much distrust of thyself, and much trust in Him; with much denial of thyself, and much love to Him; and this preparing and training of the heart may prove useful, and make it more dexterous when brought to a real conflict. In all, both beforehand and in the time of the trial, make thy Lord Jesus all thy strength. That is our only way in all to be conquerors through Him that loved us. If the children of God consider their trials, not in their natural bitterness, but in the sweet love from whence they spring, and the sweet fruits that spring from them, that we are our Lord's gold, and that He tries us in the furnace to purify us (as in a

former verse). This may beget not only patience, but gladness even in the sufferings. But add we this, and truly it completes the reason of this way of rejoicing in our saddest sufferings, that in them we are partakers of the sufferings of Christ.

LEIGHTON.

LET the believer be induced to look upon his present afflictions, of whatever kind, in a very different light from what unbelief would represent them. The Gospel opens a most encouraging view to the mind. Ye oppressed, ye afflicted, ye tried and tempted, tossed with tempests and not comforted, consider it well. Those things which so alarm your fears are the means the Lord is using to promote your best, because your spiritual and eternal interest; that which you would prefer before all things if you were but as wise as He. They flow from the abundance of His love, the unchangeableness of His purposes of grace, from that mercy which is from everlasting to everlasting, and which secures that all the ways of the Lord should be mercy and truth, to such as keep His covenant and His testimonies. He is hewing the living stones of His Church for the spiritual building, the temple on Mount Zion, that they may be prepared for the place designed for them before they be brought

there. He is cleansing His people from the pollution that is in the world, that He may fit them for a life of light and purity, and make them meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. He is melting down the metal, that He may purify it, that, divested of its dross, He may again cast it into His own mould, to restore that image which was defaced, or rather destroyed, that it may bear His divine impression, with perfect purity and glory, throughout eternity. Not a grain shall be lost, though it pass through the fiery trial; it shall be His eternal treasure. . . . . He sits by, observing the whole: He has well observed the need they stand in of the trying dispensation; what peculiar trials are suited to their state. If in heaviness through manifold temptations, it is that the trial of faith being much more precious than of gold which perisheth, though it be tried with fire, may be found to praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ (1 Pet. i. 7).

God hath so ordered things, that the vain and empty delights of this world should be temporary and transient, but that the great and substantial pleasures of the other world should be as lasting as they are excellent; for heaven as it is an exceeding,

so it is an eternal weight of glory. And lastly, this happiness is far above anything that we can now conceive or imagine. It is so great, that it cannot now enter into the heart of man. In this imperfect state we are not capable of a full representation of those glories. We cannot now see God, and live. A full description of heaven, and of the pleasures of that state, would let in joys upon us too big for our narrow capacities, and too strong for weak mortality to bear. We are now but children, and we speak as children, and understand and think as children, concerning these things; but in the other state, we shall grow up to be men, and then we shall put away these childish thoughts. Now we know but in part; but when that which is perfect is come, that which is imperfect shall be done away. Now we see through a glass darkly, but then we shall see face to face; now we know in part, but then shall we know even as also we are known (1 Cor. xiii. 9—12). No sooner shall we enter upon the joys of the other world, but our minds shall be raised to a strength and activity as much above that of the most knowing persons in this world, as the thoughts of the greatest philosopher and wisest man upon earth are above the thoughts of a child or a fool, No man's mind is now so well framed to understand anything in this world, as our under-

standings shall then be fitted for the knowledge of God and of the things that belong to that state. In the meantime, let us bless God that He hath revealed so much of this happiness to us as is necessary to excite and encourage us to seek after it, and to bear with resignation the loss of those who are gone before. ARCH. TILLOTSON.

CHILDREN, relations, friends, honours, houses, lands, revenues, and endowments, the goods of nature and of fortune, nay even of grace itself, are only *lent*. It is our misfortune to fancy they are *given*. We start, therefore, and are angry when the loan is called in. We think ourselves *masters*, when we are but *stewards;* and forget that to each of us will it one day be said, "Give an account of thy stewardship, for thou must be no longer steward." BISHOP HORNE.

CAN any words more beautifully describe the blessedness of trusting in God, than those of the 23rd Psalm; "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths

of righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me, Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." What cheerfulness, what courage, what peace, holy gratitude, and heavenly piety, breathe through this noble composition. These are the rewards of placing our confidence in God; and however our timid hearts and wavering intellects may deceive us, these are the true and everlasting sources of happiness; these are the riches with which no stranger intermeddles.

"AFFLICTION," says the Apostle, "is not joyous, but grievous." Hence, outward troubles may damp the believer's joy, while he looks off from the Saviour to the boisterous winds and waves which rage around him. Peter did so, and began to sink. Faith, however, clings fast to the Saviour, and exults in the storm.

GOD PRUNETH THE VINE OF OUR AFFECTIONS.

A VINE, which is one of our most beautiful trees (made use of by God to compare the Christian unto), if it be left to its natural growth, unregarded and unpruned, shoots forth into many superfluous branches

and stems, and spendeth its most generous strength *that* way, and so becometh weak and fruitless. If God should leave the best Christian to evils of his own heart and affections, and not curb and prune them, and retrench the extravagancy of his desires, his strength would be spent on that which profiteth not, and he would soon grow barren and useless. There is need that, both by his returning grace to reduce and limit our desires, and that by the sharp knife of affliction, he cut short and check their excrescences. PENN.

WHEN we are tempted to arraign the dispensations of Providence, we should recollect that eternity is to be taken into our calculation. In a mixt state like the present, we indeed behold the tears of the oppressed, and that they have no comforter; and hence, perhaps, our faith may waver; nor can we discern or determine by the outward circumstances of men concerning any degree of moral good or evil under the sun. There is no end of reasoning on the subject, it comes not within the range of finite capacity. Happy is he who keeps simply to the Bible; the difficulty is therein solved. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

It is not Paul alone, nor John, nor James, nor Peter, who are described in the book of Revelation as clothed in white robes, and with palms in their hands, and made equal with the angels. It is a mighty multitude, which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, who are to hunger and thirst no more, whom the Lamb is to feed and to lead unto living fountains, and from whose eyes God is to wipe away every tear. And can we consider this multitude without a comfortable hope that those, in whom our own souls have delighted during their sojournment below, have, by the mercy of Christ, perhaps attained to the same blessedness? Does not our fancy picture to us, in the midst of this glorious assembly, some familiar faces, some friend, or parent, or kinsman? Or shall we not bless God, whose promises have so greatly disarmed death of its sting, and made the departure of a pious person the subject of thanksgiving more than of sorrow? "The souls of the righteous are in the hand of the Lord, and there shall no torment touch them. In the sight of the unwise, they seemed to die; and their departure is taken for misery; and their going from us to be utter destruction; yet they are in peace. For though they be punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality." Shall

we weep, then, for the dead who die in the Lord? or, shall we not rather do our diligence to be found one day in the number of those who are to dwell with Him, and be restored, to part no more, to that society which was on earth our support and happiness? But, I confess, I am inclined to suppose something further intended, and to believe that the souls of virtuous men, in another world, do not lose all knowledge of those things which are done by their surviving fellow Christians; that they rejoice with us in our victories over sin, and look down, with anxious hopes to the moment, when our toils, like theirs, shall be completed. Thus St. Paul, after reckoning up the ancient worthies of the Jewish Church, and the triumphs which their faith had achieved, urges us to greater diligence by representing them as *witnesses* of our conflicts, and as sharing in the joy of our deliverance. We know, indeed, that "there is joy among the angels of God over every sinner that repenteth;" and if the privilege of beholding the things which pass on earth be given to those glorious beings, it is also possible, I might say, it is also likely, that the departed saints may be allowed to watch over the actions of those from whom, for a little time, they are separated. Nor can I conceive a much stronger argument, with the generality of mankind, to virtue and holi-

ness, than that "Seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, we should lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus." HEBER.

IN order to show the reasonableness of present afflictions, let us consider they are the way to rest; they keep us from mistaking our rest, and from losing our way to it. Consider that labour and trouble are the common way to rest, both in the course of nature and of grace. Can there possibly be rest without weariness? Do you not travail and toil first, and rest after? The day for labour is first, and then follows the night for rest. Why should we desire the course of grace to be perverted any more than the course of nature? It is an established decree that we must, through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of God (Acts xiv. 22). Afflictions are also God's most effectual means to keep us from losing our way to our rest. Without this hedge of thorns on the right hand and left, we should hardly keep the way to heaven. If there be but one gap open, how ready are we to find it, and turn out at it. When we grow worldly, or proud, how doth sickness or other affliction

reduce us. Every Christian, as well as Luther, may call affliction one of his best school-masters; and with David may say, "Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept Thy word" (Ps. cxix. 67). Once more consider, God seldom gives His people so sweet a foretaste of their future rest as in their deep afflictions. He keeps His most precious cordials for the time of our greatest faintings and dangers. He gives them when He knows they are needed, and will be valued, and when He is sure to be thanked for them, and His people rejoiced by them. When did Christ preach such comforts to His disciples, as when their hearts were sorrowful at His departure? When did He appear among them and say, "Peace be unto you," but when they were shut up for the fear of the Jews? When did Stephen see heaven opened, but when he was giving up his life for the testimony of Jesus? Is not this our best state, wherein we have most of God? Have our afflictions wrought kindly with us, and fitted us for comfort. It is not mere suffering that prepares us for comfort, but the success and fruit of sufferings upon our hearts.

BAXTER.

AFTER dwelling on the consolations prepared for the Christian sufferer, you are tempted to let them

pass away from your memories as though they concerned you not; but you will need them; your sunshine will not go with you all the way to the grave. As surely as you are the children of Christ, so surely will he make you acquainted with the days of darkness. You know not how many of them may be your portion, nor how soon they may come. You know not what clouds may even now be gathering around your path; what fears and discouragements, and temptations, and conflicts, may be near at hand. Expect trials. Prepare for them. Take unto you the whole armour of God. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. Treasure up in your memory its precious promises. When trouble comes, let it find you ready, waiting to receive, and strengthened to endure it. "What, shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Shall we take the comforts He has prepared for His children, and murmur at His corrections? He measures out to us good and evil, light and darkness, with infinite wisdom and love; and we must learn to receive both with equal thankfulness. There may be changes, and counterchanges, in our lot; and what if there be? Through the power of the Holy Ghost, they are subduing our corruptions, exercising our graces, bringing us to a more simple dependence on our God. And He who sends them,

marks them all, controls them all, turns them all to one blessed end. Rest satisfied, brethren, with this truth, that however mysterious and perplexing many things within you and around you may seem, they are all parts of one and the same plan; that this plan is continually before the Lord; that it has been so from your cradle, and will be so to your grave; that He studied and arranged it in eternity; and in eternity will glorify Himself for the grace which it displays. Your own lips shall praise Him there—praise Him, not merely for the love that formed you for Himself, the Saviour who redeemed, the Spirit who sanctified, and the heavenly consolations which refresh you: but praise Him for the troubles which have brought you low, the conflicts which have made you tremble, the sorrows that have almost broken your heart, and the weakness that has subdued it. And the time is drawing nigh. The night is already far spent, the day is at hand, a cloudless, never ending day. Let us look forward to it. Let us look at the things which are not seen. Let us think of them till, among all the chances and changes of this mortal life, we can say with the happy Paul, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound; everywhere, and in all things, I am instructed both

to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." BRADLEY.

AGAINST THE INDULGENCE OF FEAR IN SEASONS OF TRIALS AND DIFFICULTIES.

CHARGE your consciences solemnly with the authority of the Divine command to suppress your fears. Remember that the exercises of faith, courage, and holy firmness of soul, are duties as well as blessings. Read how often the great God forbids His people to indulge their fears (Is. xli. 10, 13, 14; Is. xliii. 1—5; Is. xliv. 2—8). Fear not, is a command perpetually repeated, because God well knew how prone our feeble natures are to be affrighted at every appearance of danger. And even when He calls His people Jacob a worm, and confesses the extreme weakness of their nature under that emblem, yet He insists on the same precepts still, "Fear not thou worm Jacob" (Is. xli. 14). Our blessed Lord joins frequently in the same prohibition of a slavish fear (Matt. x. 28). "Fear not them who can kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but fear Him rather, who can destroy both body and soul in hell." And Peter, who once wanted courage and denied his Lord, in his elder

and better days grew bolder for the name of Christ, and He forbids us to be afraid or troubled at the terror of men (1 Peter iii. 14). He repeats the charge of the Prophet Isaiah, "Sanctify the Lord of Hosts in your heart; the Lord of Hosts alone is the proper object of our supreme fear. This will overrule and abolish all other fears, as the little noises of earth are lost in the thunders of heaven. The fear of God, in a sublime degree, will be an effectual cure of our sinful fear of creatures. It is true, the principle of fear is a natural affection; it is rooted in flesh and blood; it grows high and domineers, especially in some constitutions; and when the natural spirits are enfeebled, it still gains the greater ascendancy over us; but if it be indulged and encouraged, it soon becomes sinful, for it seems to stand opposite to the grace of faith, and too often prevails over it. Therefore Christ chides his disciples when they were affrighted in the storm, while He was in the ship, "Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?" (Mark iv. 40.) And even when Peter was walking upon the water, and Christ was near him, He saith, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" (Matt. xiv. 31.) For a Christian to give himself up to the wild tyranny of his fears, is contrary to the very spirit and design of the Gospel of Christ. Ye have

not received the spirit of bondage to fear, but the spirit of adoption, the spirit of power and love (Rom. viii. 15). Remember, then, you are the sons and daughters of God. It is below the dignity of your character to yield to fear, and your Father Himself reproves, and your Redeemer forbids it.

WATTS.

MATT. XIV. 30.—But when Peter saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

"It was," says the Evangelist, "when he saw the wind boisterous, that he began to sink." He had, therefore, withdrawn his steadfast gaze from his Divine Master, and was faithlessly looking around upon the dark clouds, and the still darker waters. How does every word of this instructive narrative agree with the believer's experience, and come home to the believer's heart. When is it that the Christian fails? When is it that the Christian desponds? When is it that the Christian begins to sink? Not in the hour, however great the trial, or afflicting the dispensation, that the eye of faith is steadfastly fixed upon his Saviour; this is not the hour when the Christian sinks: it is when he forgets and disobeys that most important command,

"Look unto me, and be ye saved;" when his path is overcast, and trouble and temptation so thickly surround him that his thoughts are led to fasten themselves upon these outward difficulties, or inward trials, and thus to be withdrawn from the Fountain of strength and succour. Christian friends, this is a temptation against which we cannot too earnestly, or too constantly be upon our guard; for it is one of the most common and most successful with which our spiritual enemy assails us. Let nothing induce you to turn the eye of faith, even for a passing hour, from the Saviour of sinners; while you look on Him, you are safe; danger begins the moment that you cease to do so; once turn aside, because the cloud is dark, or the wind is boisterous; give the reins to a desponding imagination; follow out the delusive reasonings of a deceitful or a doubting heart; and the inevitable effect will be, that every moment so spent will the more widely separate you from Him who alone can be your refuge and your support. Your strength, your only strength, consists in cleaving daily, and hourly, to your Redeemer, and drawing from His unsearchable riches, and His inexhaustible fulness, a sufficiency for all your poverty and for all your need. BLUNT.

In this day of probation and trial God does not expect His children to manifest no feeling, no shrinking from trial; nor does He require that they should strive to steel the heart against the entrance of natural grief, or stem the current of natural sorrow; far otherwise; the softening and quickening principles of Gospel truth are calculated to arouse all the natural emotions of the mind, and what the child of God must learn, is to guide the current by the rulings of God's will. His portion here is one of trial; let him not wonder that his soul should often tremble under it, and that sadness and sorrow should overshadow him; but let him be careful that he leans upon his Father's hand in the dark and cloudy day; that he sorrow not as one without hope, but as one whose times are in God's hands; he never can sin if he prays, "Let this cup pass from me," provided he further follows in the spirit of his Master, "Not my will, but thine be done." Blunt.

THE WIDOW AND FATHERLESS.

There are some cases of distress which are particularly mournful, but then they have peculiar comforts. That of the widow, for instance, and especially the *poor widow*, left with children around

her wanting support, deprived not only of the husband and father, but the means of living and the supplies of bread. To a person thus severely tried what comfort can you offer; what blessings has she left? She has the greatest of blessings; the immediate and especial care of Providence; of that God, who, through His gracious word, hath shewn Himself tenderly concerned for the interests of the widow and the orphan, whose cause He hath promised not only to plead, but to avenge; and whose cause He hath recommended to His people by the strongest arguments. Leave thy fatherless children to me, saith He, and I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me. Let them but trust in God, and lead such holy lives as may give them reasonable grounds for such a trust, and they will experience the protecting mercy of his Fatherly hand. Their children, duly and carefully instructed by them, shall become comforts to their age, and soothers of all their sorrows. Friends, unexpected friends, shall arise, providential friends; for pure religion and undefiled before God the Father is this, to visit (to visit with comfort and assistance) the fatherless and widows in their affliction; and blessed of the Lord is the man who judgeth their cause, and helpeth them in their distress.

BISHOP DODD.

THE duty of submitting to God's will, is, indeed, most acceptable to God, and most becoming to us. How blessed is the temper which can enable us to say, in the words of the most eminent pattern of resignation, "Father, Thy will be done!" Surely we ought anxiously to strive for such a temper as this, especially as there is so great need of it among the changes and varieties which human nature is heir to; and to obtain it, permit me to observe, that the first and great step will be to know and to remove the great obstacles and impediments to it. These are, *unbelief*, which, in whatever degree it prevails, lessens the influence of invisible things. Did we believe the sincere word of God, did we firmly and undoubtedly rely on the promises of Christ, how could we sorrow as men without hope, for those that sleep in Him, for those that sleep the happy slumber of death to awaken to glory and immortality? The stronger our faith, the greater will be our resignation and comfort. Too great expectations from the world and the things of it is another impediment to this heavenly temper. We cannot expect too little from a transitory scene like the present; and we should be careful, in all our affections for temporal blessings, to remember that they are mortal and unstable. Lastly; another impediment to resignation is too high an opinion

of ourselves: this leads us to think that God has dealt hardly with us; whereas, we should remember that all we have is His free gift; that we neither have, nor can deserve, anything from Him; nay, rather, that we deserve punishment only. We shall then bow our heads with true submission. Humility is the groundwork of almost every virtue, but especially of resignation; and when we reflect seriously on ourselves, surely we can never be deficient in humility. On ourselves, who shortly must follow the beloved friends whom we lament; must shortly mingle, like them, with the dust of the earth, and enter into the unknown world. Let us, therefore, consider ourselves and our friends only as so many pilgrims and sojourners travelling forward to our Father's house. Let us consider those who are departed only as arrived there before us; and though we may tenderly lament the loss of their society, the endearments of their friendship, the kindness and support of their aid; though all we most love is withdrawn when they are withdrawn from us; yet let us console our hearts with the remembrance that we, too, shall shortly finish our journey, and shall be reunited to them, where all tears shall be wiped from our eyes, and where sorrow shall be removed from our hearts for ever. There, oh! there may we all meet our Christian

friends with whom we have travelled peacefully together through the rough roads of this mortal life. There may we meet all whom we have loved here below; and there may we for ever enjoy the happy fruits of our constant endeavours to obey the commands, and to resign, as dutiful children, to the better will of our Father and our God, in Jesus Christ our only Saviour. Amen.

BISHOP DODD.

THE SOUL DRAWING NEAR TO GOD IN PRAYER.

JOB XXIII. 3, 4.—Oh that I knew where I might find Him! that I might come even to His seat! I would order my cause before Him, &c.

THIS book of Job might, perhaps, be the first and earliest part of all the written Word of God; for learned men, upon good ground, suppose that this history was older than the days of Moses; and yet it hath many a sweet lesson of experimental religion in it, to teach the disciples of Christ. We may learn many duties and comforts from it in our day, "upon whom the ends of the world are come." The style of it, in some parts, is so magnificent and solemn, in others so tender and affectionate, that we cannot but feel impressed with its beauty. In his severest trials, "I will turn aside," saith he,

"from man, for miserable comforters are ye all; and I will address myself to God, even the God who smites me: Oh that I knew where I might find Him!" The stroke of the Father doth not make the child fly from Him, but come nearer, and bow himself before his best Friend. This is the filial temper of the children of God.

WATTS.

ON CHRISTIAN PATIENCE UNDER TRIALS.

ROMANS v. 3, 4, 5.—We glory, saith the Apostle, in tribulations; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience; and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed. Here is true cause of glory indeed, when our patience shall cause us to ascend through these degrees to the perfection of all Christian attainments. A ferfect patience stoops to the heaviest burdens, and carries them as long as God shall please, without murmuring or repining; and if that be to the grave, it knows that what is now a load shall then be found a treasure. A Christian doth but carry his crosses, which, though here they be burdensome, shall hereafter be eternally glorious. When affliction has brought a man to renounce his own will, it then resolves him into the will of God; it takes him out of his own hand,

and puts him into God's. Here patience finds its footing in the deepest waters of affliction; "it is the will and good pleasure of my Father, that thus and thus it shall be with me; and, therefore, so be it." Indeed, all religion lies in conforming our wills to the will of God, that there should be but one will between God and us, and that this should be His most wise and righteous will. The will of His precept He hath made known unto us by His word; and to that we ought to submit our wills by a cheerful performance of what He hath commanded. The will of His purpose He maketh known unto us by His providence; and to that we ought to submit our wills, by a quiet bearing of whatever He shall see good to inflict. See the practice of this excellent patience in some Scripture examples. When Samuel had delivered to Ely the sad doom which God had pronounced against his house, "It is the Lord," saith that good old man, "Let Him do what He seemeth good" (1 Sam. iii. 18). And so, likewise, David delivers himself up to God (2 Sam. xv. 25); "If I find favour in the eyes of the Lord, He will bring me again, and shew me the ark and habitation. But if He thus say, I have no delight in thee; Behold here I am, let Him do to me as seemeth good unto him." And thus, likewise, a far greater than both these, even our Lord Jesus

Christ, yields up himself wholly to His Father's will and pleasure (Luke xxii. 42); "Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will, but Thine be done."

BISHOP HOPKINS.

LET us now look upon ourselves as travellers, and make account that whatever burden God is pleased to lay upon us, He may, perhaps, not take it off till it come to our time to take up our lodging in the grave. If He discharge us of it sooner, let us acknowledge His mercy; but let us be sure that we discharge not our patience before God discharges our burden. BISHOP HOPKINS.

LET us not lose courage, even under the severest trials. If we could but know, but believe, but understand, the love of God, we should never be cast down, or suffer our souls to be disquieted. It appears to me to be plainer and plainer every day, that our duty is to fit ourselves to whatever may befal us; we cannot alter circumstances; we can only change ourselves; and a mind fully tuned to its circumstances can alone be happy and fit for the Master's use. ANON.

TRUST IN GOD OUR SUPPORT IN TRIALS.

Would you be quiet, and have peace within in troublous times? Keep near to God; beware of anything that may interpose betwixt you and your confidence. It is good for me, says the Psalmist, to be near God; not only to draw near, but to keep near, to cleave to Him, and dwell in Him; so the Word imports! Oh! the sweet calm of such a soul amidst all storms. Thus once trusting and fixed, then no more fear; he is not afraid of evil tidings. Whatsoever it is, though not thought on particularly before, yet the heart is not afraid of the views of it, because it is *fixed, trusting in the Lord.* The soul trusting in God is prepared for all; and in the saddest apprehensions of the soul, beyond hope, believes against hope; even in the darkest night casts anchor in God, reposes on Him when He sees no light (Is. l. 10). "Yea, though He slay me," says Job, "yet will I trust in Him." I am persuaded, that in all the commotions of the world, when a believer thinks on this, it cannot but calm and compose his spirit accordingly—*my Father rules all.* Oh! that the effect of all our troubles and dangers were to drive us more to God; to make us throng more about the throne of grace. It is our God that commands all; and we may say it

upon His own warrant, it is prayer that commands Him. LEIGHTON.

Now this is reason sufficient, and carries it beyond all other reason, why Christians are called to a suffering life, seeing the Lord and Author of that calling suffered Himself so much. The Captain, or Leader, of our salvation, as the apostle speaks, was consecrated by suffering (Heb. xi. 10). That was the way by which He entered into the holy place, where He is now our everlasting High Priest, making intercession for us. If He be our Leader to salvation, must we not follow Him in the way He leads? If it be, as we see it is, by the way of sufferings, we must either follow on in that way, or fall short of salvation. It could hardly be believed at first that this was His way; and we can as hardly yet believe that it must be ours. O fools, and slow of heart to believe! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into His glory? (Luke xxiv. 25, 26.) LEIGHTON.

MOTIVES FOR CHRISTIAN CHEERFULNESS.

LET us now consider the motives afforded us, as Christians, to cultivate a cheerful disposition of

mind under all the dispensations of this life. The nature of the Christian religion is sufficiently expressed by the term so often used to denote it. It is a communication of good news, which should be received in this case, as in all others, with a joy proportionable to its importance; and as it is of the highest importance, should, therefore, be productive of the greatest joy. The patriarchs and prophets, who viewed afar off that wonderful event which hath since taken place, were affected by it in a very sensible and lively manner. Your father Abraham, says our Lord to the Jews, rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad. Isaiah is in raptures whenever he has occasion to touch upon the subject: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings! Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted His people. Sing, O heavens, for the Lord hath done it; shout, ye lower parts of the earth; break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein; for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified Himself in Israel." When the predictions were accomplished, and the Divine Person who had been the subject of them made his appearance in the flesh, the heavenly messengers published the news in the following terms:—"Behold, I bring

you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." The Gospel was accordingly received by the first converts, on the day of Pentecost, with gladness and singleness of heart. Into whatsoever city or country it came there was great joy in that place; and the joy, we find, was such that it raised its possessors above the world, and triumphed over all afflictions. Of other things they were often despoiled; but their joy no man took from them. In every situation and condition, they did then what the Apostle exhorts all Christians to do; they rejoiced evermore. Nor can we wonder that the Gospel should, in its name and nature, portend joy, when we reflect that its end was to deliver mankind from sorrow. Sorrow first entered into the world as a necessary attendant on sin, which filled the minds of men with disquietude and anxiety; their bodies with diseases and pains. The Gospel removes the former by the pardon it holds forth; and enables us cheerfully to bear the latter by the grace it confers. God, therefore, represents himself in it as the God of love and of all consolation. Our Lord calls us to Him that He may give us rest and refreshment; that He may wipe all tears from our eyes; that we may enter into our Master's joy; and that our joy may be full. For this purpose He has sent us a blessed Comforter to abide with us for

ever, whose firstfruits are love, joy, and peace; a spirit cheerful in himself, and making those cheerful who are partakers of Him; cheerful in trouble, cheerful out of trouble; cheerful while they live, cheerful when they die; cheerful in using well the blessings of this life, cheerful in expecting the blessedness of the next; cheerful through faith, while they believe in the great and precious promises made to them; cheerful through hope which depends upon their accomplishment; cheerful through charity, in doing acts of mercy and loving-kindness; till they come to that land of plenty where none shall want; to those regions of joy from whence sorrow shall be for ever excluded.

BISHOP HORNE.

STRENGTH TO BEAR AFFLICTION MUST BE PROVIDED BEFOREHAND.

STRENGTH to bear affliction must not only shew itself in time of affliction, but it must be provided beforehand; we must be well appointed and furnished with strength against the time of trouble, which must shew itself in bearing it with patience. The Apostle's words are very direct and plain: "*We must be strengthened with patience.*" And this is further cleared (Ephes. vi. 10), where the Apostle exhorteth to be strong in the Lord, and in

the power of His might; and in the next words subjoins, that we must be armed, and at all points provided, and *put on the complete armour of God, that we may be able to stand against the assaults of the devil;* and (verse 13), *For this cause,* saith he, *take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to resist in the evil day*—that is, either of temptation or affliction. It is worthy observation, to this purpose, that our Saviour saith, *possess your souls in patience* (Luke xxi. 19). Patience and strength to bear affliction must be ours, not as a thing borrowed for the present, but by just title and possession we must have it of our own; we must be provided with it, to use when time shall serve. Again, we are often to meditate on the immutability of God's love; that His love never changeth; but He is the same good God when He afflicteth us, as when He prospereth any of his children. If we persuade ourselves that we are within the compass of His special love, we must often think upon it, that His love is without change, and that whom He loves once, He loves for ever. He may change our estate, as seems good to Him, from prosperity to adversity, but He is the same good God; good before affliction, good in affliction, and ever good to His children. And if this be thought upon and settled, it will furnish our hearts

with a notable measure of Christian courage and fortitude; and we shall find ourselves enabled to bear the greatest affliction (Job. xiii. 13).

COMFORT UNDER AFFLICTION.

What an effectual method the Lord takes to administer comfort to His people under all their hopes and trials! He does not promise friends or another husband to the widow, or to raise up an earthly parent to the fatherless—though He often does these things; but His promises are more suitable to His own liberality and glory. A Father to the fatherless, and a Judge of the widow, is God in His holy habitation. He relieveth the fatherless and widow; and in Him the fatherless findeth mercy. He takes them more immediately under His own protection and care; and He will make up their deficiency of outward comfort and blessings. Thus, when He takes away an earthly, He gives them a heavenly blessing. When Christ commanded the young man in the gospel, to sell all that he had, He promised him a treasure in heaven. When He called Abraham to forsake his own country and kindred, He promised Himself to be his shield and exceeding great reward. When Joseph was separated from his friends, his father and his father's

house, it is particularly added; and the Lord was with Joseph, that is, in especial manner. He more particularly, than heretofore, manifested Himself to him, supported and comforted him, and gave him also favour in the eyes of all he had to do with. He made his dungeon a palace to him, and the very gate of heaven. Thus, when God takes away any earthly comfort, he proposes an exchange for one that is heavenly and spiritual. He offers Himself to us in the room of all.

ON THE LOSS OF CHILDREN.

2 Kings iv. 25, 26.—And it came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to Gehazi his servant, Behold, yonder is that Shunammite: Run now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say unto her, Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well.

The instance before us is not so memorable as many others in the Word of God, recorded, doubtless, for our imitation under this bitter evil of life—such as Aaron, who held his peace when his two sons were struck dead in a moment by fire

from the Lord—which destroyed them in the very act of their sin; or that of Job, who, when the death of ten children at one blow was added to the spoil of his great possessions, could say, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Still, the case of the Shunammite is in many respects more suitable to the common events of daily life, as it shows us the wisdom, composure, and piety of one of the weaker and tenderer sex: and to those who study it must, indeed, afford a bright example of piety. It will serve to prove to us how reasonable such a temper is; and show how much cause Christian parents have to borrow the language of the text when their children are taken away; and to say with the good Shunammite, in the noblest sense that her words will bear, "It is well." There is surely reason, in such a case, to say "It is well," because God doth it. This passed for an unanswerable reason with David—"I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because Thou didst it" (Psalm xxxix. 9): and with good old Eli, under a severer trial than ours, "It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth good in His sight" (1 Sam. iii. 18). And shall we object against the force of it? Was it a reason to David and to Eli, and is it not equally so to us? God's Kingdom ruleth over all; there is

not so much as a sparrow that falls to the ground without our Father; but the very hairs of our head are all numbered by Him. Can we, then, imagine that our dear children fall into their graves without His notice or interposition? Did that watchful eye that keepeth Israel, now, for the first time, slumber and sleep? and an enemy lay hold of that moment to bury our joys and hopes in the dust?

Diseases and accidents are but second causes which owe all their operations to the continued energy of the great original cause. Therefore, God says, "I will bereave them of children;" "I will take away the desire of thine eyes with a stroke." What shall we say then. Are not the administrations of His providence wise and good? Can we teach Him knowledge? Can we tax Him with injustice: Shall the most high God learn of us how to govern the world, and be instructed by our wisdom when to remove His creatures from one state of being to another? Or do we imagine that His administration, in the general right and good, varies when He comes to touch our bone and our flesh? Is that the secret language of our soul, "That it is well others should drink of the cup, but not me; that any families but ours should be broken, and any

hearts but ours should be wounded?" Who might not claim the like exemption? And what would become of the divine government in general, or where would be His obedient homage from His creatures, if each should begin to complain as soon as it comes to his own turn to suffer? Much fitter is it for us to conclude that our own afflictions may be as reasonable as those of others; that amidst all the clouds and darkness of His present dispensation, righteousness and judgement are the habitation of His throne; and in a word, that it is well, because God hath done it. "Tears will not," as Sir William Temple finely expresses it, "water the lovely plant so as to cause it to grow again; sighs will not give it new breath; nor can we furnish it with life and spirits by the waste of our own." The sentence is finally gone forth, and the last fatal stroke irrecoverably given. Opposition is vain; a forced submission gives but little rest to the mind; a cordial acquiescence in the divine will is the only thing in the whole world that can ease the labouring heart, and restore true serenity. It will lead the Christian to plead with God in prayer, till at length the storm is laid, and tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope which maketh not ashamed, while the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, so as to humble it for every

preceding opposition, and to bring it even to a real approbation of all that so wise and good a Friend hath done; resigning every other interest and enjoyment to His disposal, and sitting down with the sweet resolution of the Prophet, "Though the fig tree do not blossom, and there be no fruit in the vine; yet will I rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my salvation." And when we are brought to this, the whole horizon clears, and the sun breaks forth in its strength. Now I appeal to every sincere Christian, whether there will not be reason indeed to say, "It is well;" if by this painful affliction we learn more of the vanity of the creature: if we are awakened to serious thoughts of our own latter end; if by it we are quickened in the duties of life, and formed to a more entire resignation of soul and acquiescence in the divine will. Let us, then, sorrow like men, and like parents; but let us not in the mean time forget that we are Christians. Let us recollect our many offences against our heavenly Father, those sins which such a dispensation may properly bring to our remembrance; and let that silence us and teach us to own, that it is of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, and that we are punished less than our iniquities deserve. Let those of us who are under the rod be very solicitous to improve it aright, that in the end it may indeed

be well. Let us, now God is calling us to mourning and lamentation, be searching and trying our ways, that we may turn again unto the Lord. Let us review the conduct of our lives, and the state and tenor of our affections, that we may observe what hath been deficient and what irregular; let us pray that through our tears we may read our duty, and that by the heat of the furnace we may be so melted that our dross may be purged away, and the divine image instamped on our souls in brighter and fairer characters. To sum up all in one word, let us endeavour to set our hearts more on that God, who is infinitely better to us than ten children, who hath given us a name better than that of sons and daughters, and can abundantly supply the place of all earthly enjoyments with the rich communications of His grace: nay, perhaps we may add, who hath removed some darling of our hearts, lest, to our infinite detriment, it should fill his place there; and by alienating us from His love and service, have a fatal influence on our present peace and our future happiness. God hath made with us an everlasting covenant, and blessed be His name, we hold not the mercies of that covenant by so precarious a tenure as the life of any creature; it is well ordered in all things and sure; may it be all our salvation and all our desire; and then it is but a little while

and all our complaints will cease. God will wipe away these tears from our eyes; our peaceful and happy spirits shall, ere long, meet with those of our children which He hath taken to Himself; our bodies shall sleep, and ere long shall also awake, and arise with theirs. Death, that inexorable destroyer, shall be swallowed up in victory, while we and ours surround the throne with everlasting hallelujahs, and own, with another evidence than we can perceive, with another spirit than we can now express, that all was indeed *well*. Amen.

DODDRIDGE.

ON THE LOSS OF CHILDREN.

HEAR what comfortable words our Lord saith to those that mourn for young children; "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God" (Luke xviii. 16). "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. xviii. 10). "Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. xviii. 3).

"WHAT I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." At present, how much in our life is there involved in mystery and darkness! how many things have happened to us, the meaning of which we cannot comprehend! That dark and freezing cloud which now casts its shadow on your heart, and which you cannot understand, has its mission, and the new light will disclose it. That stroke which smote down your first-born and fairest, has a meaning and an issue, though you could not understand it; and that blow which you cannot think of now without shedding tears of bitterness, will then be seen to have been but the touch of a Father who loved. A stroke inflicted by the hand that was nailed to the cross for you—those dealings of providence which you cannot now comprehend, will then be seen distinctly by you to have had an aim and a bearing, and inspire you with deeper thankfulness to Him who led you all the way through the wilderness, and placed you there. Then shall you see all things to have been working together for your good; and that the darkest cloud had ever a smiling face behind it, and that the bitterest cup had in it a secret sweet. CUMMING.

CHILDREN, relations, friends, honours, houses, lands, revenues, and endowments; the goods of nature

and of fortune, nay, even of grace itself, are only *lent*. It is our misfortune to fancy that they are *given*. We start, therefore, and are angry, when the loan is called in. We think ourselves *masters*, when we are but *stewards;* and forget that to each of us will it one day be said, "Give an account of thy stewardship, for thou must be no longer steward.

Is there not a great difference between the thought of losing those we love for ever; of taking, at their deaths or our own, an eternal farewell, never to see them more; and the reflection, that we are about to be separated, for a few years at the longest, to be united with them in a new and better state of mutual existence? Is there not, I say, a difference to the heart of man between these two things; and does it not call upon us to strive with redoubled endeavours that the case may truly turn out so? The more and more we reflect upon the difference between the consequences of a careless, profane, dishonest life, and a life of religion, sobriety, seriousness, good actions, and good principles, the more we shall see the madness of the one, and the true solid wisdom of the other. This is one of the distinctions. If we go on in our sins, we are not to expect to awaken to a joyful meeting with our

friends and relations, and dear connexions. If we turn away from our sins, and take up religion in earnest, we may. Religion disarms even death. It disarms it of that which is its bitterness and sting, the power of dividing those who are dear to one another. But this blessing, like every blessing which it promises, is only to the just and good, to the penitent and reformed; to those who are touched with a sense of its importance, who know thoroughly and experimentally, who feel in their inward mind and consciences, that religion is the only course that can end well; that can bring either them or theirs to the presence of God, blessed for evermore; that can cause them, after the toils of life and struggles of death are over, to meet again, in a joyful deliverance from the grave, in a new and never-ceasing happiness, in the presence and society of one another. PALEY.

ISAIAH XL. 1.—Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.

SHALL not those who are, indeed, the people of God be exhorted to take to themselves, while they continue steadfast in faith and holiness, the consolations which their God has provided for them? Fear not ye, who set your hearts on salvation through

Christ. Fear not ye; for ye seek Jesus which was crucified. Fear not ye; for your Redeemer liveth; Fear not ye; for ye have an Almighty protector. Fear not ye; for He hath promised to strengthen you with might adequate to your trials. Fear not ye; for ye are under the guidance of infinite wisdom, goodness, and love. Fight the good fight of faith. You shall have serenity during the conflict, and victory at the close. Cast all your care on Him who careth for you. Rejoice in the Word of God; comfort yourselves in the Word of the Lord. Verily, ye shall know, that the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever. GISBORNE.

ONE thing is clear, man is "a living soul;" and the volume of inspiration makes known to us all that is necessary for our present encouragement and future hope as to our final destination. "This mortal shall put on immortality." But above all other consolations arising from this sublime assurance, is this—that the immaterial principle is destined for God, its creator and sanctifier. It is in Him, and through Him, and by Him, that we shall taste the eternal felicity of reunion with those we loved on earth. "Brethren, now are we the sons of

God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He who is our life shall appear, we shall be made like Him, for we shall see Him as He is, and appear with Him in glory." The redeemed pass before the vision of our faith, and a voice from heaven proclaims, "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them to living fountains of water; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Oh! when we contemplate the consoling and delightful subject of our assured resurrection from the grave, when the turf that covers our dead becomes an altar before which we may kneel to commend our own spirits to the great Being before whom our departed friends live, and whose power will soon reunite the ties He in wisdom has severed awhile: how cheered is the prospect, and how truly may we say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." The very spirit of consolation breathes in the assurance that our faded forms of mortality shall not be forgotten by our God; that the corruptible shall become incorruptible; the dishonoured, glorious; the feeble, powerful; and the

natural, spiritual; that death shall be swallowed up in victory. Oh! that we may thankfully acknowledge the inestimable value of that holy volume by which these sublime discoveries are disclosed to us. Let us remember there was a time when the heart of man looked onward with fearful anticipation and suspense as he descended the valley of the shadow of death; for revelation was not there to guide and to support His trembling and uncertain steps, and a darkness which might be felt oppressed and overwhelmed the departed spirit: but blessed, thrice blessed be the God and Father of Lord Jesus Christ; we may now approach that awful hour, assured that He, the friend of sinners is with us, and through Him death is swallowed up in victory.

David declares, from his own experience, "before I was afflicted I went wrong but now have I kept thy laws. It is good for me that I have been in trouble, that I might learn thy statutes." As afflictions are thus sent by God to correct our past and amend our future conduct, so are they no less conducive to another good purpose which our heavenly Father graciously designs, namely, "the weaning our affections from this world, and raising them to a better." . . . . . "O death!" says the

wise man, "how bitter is the remembrance of thee unto a man who liveth at rest in his possessions; unto the man who hath nothing to vex him, and who hath prosperity in all things" (Eccles. xli. 1). In such a situation, full of peace and full of plenteousness, the heart is riveted to this world; the enjoyment of things present dissipates the very thought of things to come. But change the scene; and draw the dark veil of affliction over it; turn this bright day into night, and, weary of the trial, the soul looks upward and longs for that state of eternal rest, where pain and anxiety shall torment us no more. And thus the wise man paints the contrast; "O Death, acceptable is thy sentence unto the needy; and unto him whose strength faileth, who is now in the last ages, and is vexed with all things" (Eccles. xlii. 2). When God thinks fit to try us with afflictions here, when he is pleased either by withdrawing our health . . . . by removing from us our friends . . . . . by taking away our support . . . . . or by any other means incapacitating us for the enjoyments and endearments of this world; . . . . . what is there in it that can withhold our desires from that place of future recompence where sickness never enters; whence our friends shall never be removed; where want shall never be known; and where we shall rest in peace

with God and with Christ for ever and ever? Another end which our heavenly Father designs by afflicting His children is "the exercise of our graces, the trial of our patience, and in consequence of our greater glory." In this respect afflictions are even necessary, since, without them, there are many Christian graces which could not even exist. Humility, resignation, patience, and Christian fortitude, without them would not be known. We may be assured that they who are most humble, most resigned, and most patient, under the correcting hand of Heaven, will receive from that hand the fairest recompence; and the best increase of future glory.

BISHOP DODD.

GENESIS XVI. 13.—And she called the name of the Lord that spake unto her, Thou God seest me.

NOTHING can sound more simple, or more easy of comprehension, than these words of Hagar, and yet they are very solemn words. It was to a "fountain of water in the wilderness" that she had fled in her first flight from her mistress Sarah, but the God of the wilderness was there before her. On that desert spot *His eye* rested just as it rested on the fertile plains of Canaan, and on the dwellings of faithful Abraham. Hagar might have seemed alone and deserted in her affliction; there appeared none to

support, none to cheer her in her distress; but *He saw her.* He spoke words of comfort and peace to her by the voice of His angel. Well might she call the name of the Lord that spake unto her, *Thou God seest me.* He, who had on former occasions addressed Himself to her master Abraham, had now mercifully addressed herself. In her humiliation she was exalted, for she had seen the presence of the angel of the Lord, and yet did live. Now we know full well that the all-seeing God is indeed in every place, beholding the evil and the good; but let us consider whether our knowledge of this great truth has its due effect upon our hearts and lives? It had its proper effect upon Hagar, for she said, Have I also here looked after Him that seeth me? *Here in the wilderness?* Here in my solitude and desertion? Here in my afflictions? Oh! *Thou God seest me*; and, doubtless, Hagar felt in some striking manner the force of her own words; but we may, through God's blessing, discover more a great deal than she who uttered them. *Thou God seest me: Thou,* not as angel; not as created being; not as fellow man; but *Thou seest me;* Thou Father Almighty; the great God; the eternal and Holy Spirit; Thou, whose eye never tires nor sleeps; Thou, to whom "darkness and light are both alike;" and Thou seest *me,* not only my

body, but *me*, my soul, my everlasting, ever-existing, invisible soul! stripped of its earthly tabernacle. *Thou seest me* in my present deep and heartfelt sorrow; in my bitter trial and desolation, Thou, my God, seest me. Surely, then, the words of our text are highly solemn words. They teach us who we are and what we are; and they also teach us who God is, and how great God is; and besides, they speak more plainly than hearts can expect, "That the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers."

Rev. William Carter.

It is necessary to observe, that though sickness and calamity be the punishment of sin, yet it is not every sinner who meets with punishment in this life; while, on the other hand, many of the children of God are, for their own advantage, chastened and purified by sorrow and pain here below, in order that their secret sins, and those weaknesses of mortality, which hang about and defile the best of men, may be corrected and amended by the wholesome and fatherly discipline of Him, who knows what is in them, and designs whatever is best for their salvation. In an earthly father, we are told, it is love which makes him scourge his son; and the God and Father of all has shown to men and angels

how blessed in the eyes of eternal Wisdom are the sorrows with which he visits the sincere believer, in that designing to bring many sons to glory, He made the first-born and Captain of all—"perfect through suffering." Of these blessed and salutary afflictions there are four kinds. First, when disease, or misfortune, is sent to be a warning to ourselves, and to awaken our attention to the things which belong to our peace, by reminding us of our mortality, and by breaking that slumber of the soul, which worldly happiness too often produces. Secondly, afflictions and diseases are not unfrequently sent for the purpose of strengthening the soul, of weakening the hold of the flesh and the world, and of making our thoughts and wishes sit looser to life and its enjoyments; so that our soul, so far from fearing the summons of the Almighty, shall sit in patient expectation of the hour of its deliverance. Thirdly, they may be intended as an exercise and display of our faith and patience, which may redound to the advantage of other men from our good example: and may, and doubtless will, be recompensed to us by a bountiful Master, perhaps in this world, and most certainly in the world to come. There being, then, so many sweet and holy uses of adversity, so many reasons, besides a punishment for sin, which may bring it on the heads of

God's children, it is most dangerous to be hasty to construe our own or the afflictions of our neighbours into judgments; or to suppose that they, to whom such things happen, are greater sinners than all others that dwell in Jerusalem. HEBER.

FENELON says, "In this state of separation and bitterness, you will find, far from the creatures, the most powerful consolation. God will make you taste what He is Himself, when every thing else fails you." And it is peculiarly in such seasons of darkness that He sends His rays of mercy to light up our soul—that He "*comes to dwell* with the contrite and humble spirit," inspires a double portion of trust and hope, and speaks peace to the troubled mind. "When affliction come close, no firmness of mind only can or will carry a man through. However strong a man may be, affliction may be yet stronger, unless his strength be in the strength of God. Every worldly gift, without God, is empty, and God, without any worldly good, is, as of old, all-sufficient." But if you are accustomed to think, and are in the *habit of feeling* that God is your friend and father, you can always *go home* to Him who hath invited the sorrowful, the weary, to come unto Him and find rest—to repose in confidence all our griefs with Him who is "waiting to be

gracious." Without this home, none can afford shelter from the blast; there is no other refuge from the storms of humanity. Except this Friend, there is none who *will* always hear, and *can* always help: who will always love and console: "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

If in the season of affliction we spent our time in studying its peculiar duties, in connexion with the scriptural resources provided for it, instead of employing it in regretting our inability for the duties of health, we could hardly fail to make some improvement. For the blessing of God is to be expected rather when we are doing the duty of the day in its day, than when we are speculating on duties not then assigned to us. Perhaps it is only when the heart is broken by sorrow that we listen to the divine command, "Give me thy heart," "give it to *me*, for I will never deceive or disappoint, but will always satisfy and bless." How can the true Christian be devoured by anxiety? how can he be anxious at all? the future is not his concern; he has nothing to do with consequences. He has only to refer all, and lean with uncompromising reliance, on Him who has benevolence to wish his happiness, skill to contrive, power to execute, to make omni-

potence his ally, by working with Him, and losing his own will in that of his heavenly Father, "who careth for him, who seeth his going out and his coming in, and is acquainted with all his ways."

FENELON.

FRIENDSHIP IN HEAVEN.

THERE are some who doubt whether heaven itself will renew their friendship. To scatter such a distressing apprehension, let the following reasons for expecting your friendship to revive again in heaven be attended to. You cannot think that the knowledge of glorified saints shall be more imperfect than their knowledge was while they were upon earth. We shall know much *more*, not *less*, than before. Heaven exceeds earth in knowledge as it does in joy. The angels in heaven have now a distinct knowledge of the least believers on earth, and rejoice in their conversion: and are styled by Christ "their angels." Therefore, when we shall be equal to the angels, we shall certainly know our nearest friends, who will have their share with us in that glory. And though God be all in all in heaven, yet we shall there not only know, but love and rejoice in our fellow-creatures. For Christ, in His glorified human nature, will be known and loved by all His

members, without any diminution of the glory of His divine nature. The future triumphant state of the Church is often described in Scripture as a kingdom, the city of God, the new Jerusalem; each of which implies a society. The people of God are to come from the east, and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven; and, therefore, they shall not only know those great patriarchs, but shall take delight in their presence and converse. Love is a grace that never faileth.

Baxter's Converse with God in Solitude.

"BLESSED are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them." Then if the dead in Christ be blessed, they do not cease to be. Some Christians have taken up the idea that there is a cessation of life at death till the resurrection day. That when we die we cease to be until the body is raised again from the dead. Certainly there is no warrant for this in Scripture. Can you say, they are "blessed" who cease to be? Passive repose, unconscious sleep, suspension of life, and unconsciousness, are not surely elements of bliss. But I consider the idea of the future state to be a very different thing to that. I cannot conceive

of happiness without conscious life. Annihilation is not blessedness. The elevation of mind, the expansion of intellect, the enlargement of all the powers, the removal of the shackles that confine them, the spread of the soul's unfettered wing to soar and revel in unceasing life, and approach evermore to God without cessation—this is happiness. So we believe that "absent from the body" is "present with the Lord." An Apostle said this by the inspiration of that Lord, and we must believe it. They are then "blessed" that thus "die in the Lord," and to be so, they must live so.

CUMMING.

WHEN a Christian dies the eye of the mourner looks on the pale face of the dead and weeps; for there is nothing on earth so unnatural and sorrowful too as a dead face. Death is not natural; it is most unnatural; it was never meant to be; it is an infraction of the laws of God's universe; "the wages of sin is death." The natural eye looks upon that face and weeps; but the Christian looks beyond the ashes of the dead, follows the emancipated soul, and exclaims, "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

CUMMING.

An aged Christian's death has no terror in it, very little cloud on it. It is that beautiful evening twilight that mingles so imperceptibly with the twilight of the eternal morn, that the night between is scarcely felt. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." Cumming.

Rev. xiv. 13.—And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

This may comfort us against the death of our friends, who, we know, lived piously and righteously, desiring to please God in all things, and testifying the truth and soundness of their faith in Christ by their good works. Is it your own loss which you lament; because they are taken from you, with whom, nay, for whom, you would willingly have died; Even this is but the effect of self-love, and shews that you are more concerned in your own contentment than in their glory; and, that you might enjoy them yourselves, you would keep them from their near and intimate enjoyment of God.

Can you not, for a while, dispense with their absence, for their advantage; and make up the comfort which you want in their presence, by the comfort which you have in the assurance of their happiness? What our Saviour saith to His disciples, John xiv. 28, that may I say to you; If you love them, you will rejoice, because they are gone to their Father. And this separation, this absence of theirs, is but for a short time. Do you but tread the paths of their example, and follow their track, and, as their works went before them to heaven, so yours shall follow you; where you shall rest from all your sorrows and troubles; where no affliction nor discontentment shall overcast your perfect joy; where, without fear of another separation, you shall be satisfied in the enjoyment of one another, and all in the enjoyment of God. BISHOP HOPKINS.

ON THE RESURRECTION.

JOHN v. 28, 29.—The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

OUR blessed Lord here distinctly declares the doctrine of the resurrection of the body; to the

righteous a most cheering and joyful truth. Those who have wept over the lifeless form of a departed friend, and have followed with bitter anguish the funeral bier to the grave, and have seen the coffin which contained all that remains of this beloved friend deposited in the silent grave, and have thought of it as lost, and almost lost for ever, may lift up their heads. That body is the sacred dust of him who believed in Jesus, and which the Divine Spirit once inhabited; it is not dead, it only sleeps in the Lord, and shall revive again with new beauty and freshness, "fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself" (Phil. iii. 21). They "that are in the grave shall hear His voice, and shall come forth." Our Lord is here speaking of the resurrection of the body. Properly speaking, the soul never dies; it is the body only that is mingled with the dust, and laid in the grave, and the same body shall be raised. If it were another body, it would not be a resurrection, but a new creation. Job's testimony on this point is very clear. "Though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another" (Job xix. 26, 27). Our identical body, once laid

in the grave, shall be raised up. . . . . The resurrection of the body seems to be attended with some, apparently, insurmountable difficulties. Some bodies have been consumed to ashes, and the ashes scattered over the surface of the earth. Others have been devoured by wild beasts, and have become a part of their substance; and others, again, have been the food of their fellow men. From these difficulties, the Sadducees of old denied the resurrection of the dead. Like modern infidels, they insinuate impossibilities against clear revelation. Our Saviour meets all such cavils, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God" (Matt. xxii. 29). We assert, then, from the Word of God, that the same body shall rise again. How is this possible? To man, even an adequate conception is impossible. But look at what calls them forth—the voice of Christ, the voice of the Son of God, the voice of the Creator of all things the voice of "God over all blessed for ever" (Rom. ix. 5). That voice said, "Let there be light, and there was light" (Gen. i. 3); that voice said, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature, and it was so" Gen. i. 24); that voice said, "Let us make man," and "man was created" (Gen. i. 26). All creation furnishes you with emblems and illustrations. Every fresh day, with its new light and heat,

and varied blessings, is a resurrection from the darkness of the night. Every verdant spring, with all its freshness, and life, and luxuriance, is a resurrection from the frost, the torpor, and the death of winter. Every harvest which we see waving in the fields, is a resurrection of the seed even buried, dead, and quickened again. Innumerable insects floating in the air were once, apparently, inanimate substances, but they have risen again to life and activity. It is idle to talk of difficulties to Him to whom nothing is impossible; and why, it may well be asked, "Why should it be thought incredible that God should raise the dead," when His Word has assured us that He will? . . . . . Curiosity here may ask a thousand questions; "How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?" (1 Cor. xv. 35.) We cannot go a single step beyond the Scriptures; and the Bible was not written to satisfy mere curiosity, but to make us wise unto salvation. The coming forth of the righteous will be as the rising of the sun, full of beauty and full of glory, rejoicing to run his course. . . . . God has fixed a precise and particular time. "He hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness" (Acts xvii. 31). The very season is determined, as our Lord declares, "The hour is coming." But though fixed, God

has not revealed it, and, therefore, the precise time is not known to any created being; nor was the Mediator commissioned to reveal it to man; "That day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark xiii. 32), as the hour of the general resurrection is unknown to any part of created beings; this is for many appointed ends; and the practical lessons are, to take heed not to be "overcharged with the pleasures and cares of this life" (Luke xxi. 34), but ever to be watchful and prayerful; every day that passes along, every hour that hastens away, every pulse that beats within you, shortens the distance between you and this great and last scene. There is no hindering its advance. You may sooner stop the sun in its progress across the circuit of the sky than delay the approach of this fixed hour. . . . . Methinks the universality of our death and resurrection should much endear us to each other. Those who have been in one common war, and have shared in one victory, love each other as fellow-soldiers; those who have been wrecked in one storm, and saved in one life-boat, love each other as fellow-sailors; and shall not we, who have to pass through the deep valley of the shadow of death, and have all to hear the trumpet sound, and have all to be raised again

from the graves—shall not we, as fellow-travellers in the same pilgrimage, love one another fervently, and with a pure heart? Shall we not seek to help each other in attaining the resurrection unto life?

BICKERSTETH.

Now many things are dark and obscure; we see things but in part. Wicked men seem often to go unpunished; good men are tried, afflicted, and lightly esteemed. Many things seem to be against us. The godly mourn, and the wicked flourish; but the resurrection day will clear up all things. Just as the sun dispels the mists and fogs and discovers to us the beauty of nature, so the rising Sun of Righteousness, in the morning of the resurrection, will clear up all the now hidden beauties of providence and grace. We shall discover, with clearness and distinctness, the wisdom and truth, the justice and mercy, of all God's dealings, and say from the heart, "He hath done all things well" (Mark vii. 27). BICKERSTETH.

IN that celebrated chapter, the 15th of the Corinthians, St. Paul makes an inquisitive person ask, "How are the dead raised, and with what body do they come?" From his answer to this question,

we are able, I think, to collect this much clearly and certainly, that at the resurrection we shall have bodies of some sort or other; that they will be totally different, and greatly excelling our present bodies, though possibly in some manner or other proceeding from them, as a plant from its seed; that as there exists in nature a great variety of animal substances; one flesh of man, another of beasts, another of birds, another of fishes; as there exist also great differences in the nature, dignity, and splendour of inanimate substances, "one glory of the sun, another of the moon, another of the stars;" so there subsist, likewise, in the magazines of God Almighty's creation, two very distinct kinds of bodies (still both bodies), a natural body and a spiritual body; that the natural body is what human beings bear about with them now; the spiritual body, far surpassing the other, what the blessed will be clothed with hereafter. "Flesh and blood," our Apostle teaches, "cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven;" that is, is by no means suited to that state, is not capable of it. Yet living men are flesh and blood; the dead in the graves are the remains of the same; wherefore, to make all who are Christ's capable of entering into His eternal kingdom, and at all fitted for it, a great change shall be suddenly wrought; as well all the just who

shall be alive at the coming of Christ (whenever that event takes place), as those who shall be raised from the dead, shall, in the twinkling of an eye, be all changed: bodies they shall retain still, but so altered in form and fashion, in nature and substance, that "this corruptible shall put on incorruption;" what is now necessarily mortal and necessarily perishable, shall acquire a fixed and permanent existence. And this is agreeable to, or rather, the same thing as what our Apostle delivers in another Epistle, where he teaches us, that "Christ shall change our vile body, that it may be like His glorious body;" a change so great, so stupendous, that he justly styles it an act of Omnipotence. "According," says he, "to the mighty working, whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself." ARCHDEACON PALEY.

THE great doctrine of a general resurrection of the dead is another topic worthy of employing the thoughts of mourners, while they are bending over the sepulchres of their friends. A subject this, on which natural religion had formed to itself a few faint and plausible surmises and conjectures; but as these were rather the desires of affliction, the dreams and fictions of sorrow, than infallible con-

clusions, or authorised assurances, they would be often stript of all their power to administer consolation by the simple view of a cemetery. All subtle reasonings, and all fond wishes, as to the probability of resuscitated animation, would fall before the disheartening but natural question, Can breath return to bodies thus demolished and dissolved? Can these dry bones, these crumbling ashes live? Shall the dead, O God! arise and praise Thee? Shall Thy lovingkindness be declared in the grave, and Thy faithfulness in destruction? From this condition of tormenting apprehensions and gloomy despondence, the world has been fully delivered by the light of revelation. For, as surely as Christ Himself hath arisen from the dead, as surely as competent witnesses who relate that wonderful event have laid down their lives in attestation of their veracity, so sure is it that God, who hath raised up Christ, will raise up us also by the word of His power; so sure that all who are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man, and come forth.

J. GRANT.

"BLESSED are the dead which die in the Lord;" and this is His blessedness. The Spirit has returned to God who gave it; it has gone to Christ who

redeemed it, and now mingles with the glorious company of the spirits of the just made perfect: now he knows in reality what it is to be present with his Lord and Saviour in heaven. On earth he saw through the light imparted to him, that in the incarnate God all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid, but he had little time to search into these treasures. It is, indeed, blessedness beyond our utmost conception, to be for ever separated from sin, and to be for ever with the Lord. As a man he is dead; but the mortal body which has been committed to the grave, in corruption and dishonour, to mingle with its kindred dust, shall also, ere long, participate in its blessedness. It shall be raised in honour, in incorruption, and in immortality; it only waits the "Voice of the archangel and the trump of God," which are to announce the descent of the Lord himself from heaven with a shout; when the dead in Christ shall rise first, and when all the living saints on earth shall be changed. I often marvel that our thoughts are so seldom and so feebly directed to the subject of the resurrection. Oh, what a day of glory, of astonishment that will be, when the whole Church of the first born are gathered together into one, out of all tribes and kindreds of mankind, and from all climes and countries on the face of the globe;

adorned with their spiritual bodies fashioned like unto the glorified body of their Lord, shall live and reign with Him, and enjoy the completeness of the great redemption.

Those who are suffering from the sense of dreariness and desolation, which the loss of beloved friends and relatives must ever occasion, will best understand how to estimate the tender compassion and loving-kindness of our God, in selecting such moments as these, even the moments of our bitterest earthly trials and despondency, for the most gracious communications of His love. How often has the heart of the widow and the fatherless been thus cheered and thus supported! How often, under the loss of earthly friends, has he that "sticketh closer than a brother," drawn near with the communications of His grace; and in the deepest hours of nature's sufferings, and the most utter desolation of all earthly things, bound up the broken heart and comforted the desponding spirit; and said to the trembling soul, "I am thy salvation." Who will sorrow as men without hope, even for those they love the best, if the separation of the creature be in any measure the means of drawing down into our hearts the closer or sweeter communications of the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier?

It behoves us to treat suffering, whether in ourselves or others, in a much more solemn way than the generality even of serious Christians are wont to do. In itself, it were a punishment for sin, oppressive, hopeless; through God's mercy in Christ it is his healing medicine. All, from the most passing pain of the body to the most deep-seated anguish of the soul, are messengers from Him; some spread over life to temper our enjoyments, lest we seek our joys here; some following closely upon what is wrong; some gradually thickening upon us, if we neglect our first warnings; some coming suddenly, in an instant, to startle people out of their lethargy and careless ways, and show them that the life which they are wasting is an earnest thing: some in the natural order of His providence, as the loss of parents, and of children—yet, in all we may discern His fatherly care, tempering our cup with pain and sorrow, as he sees most needful for us; and teaching us to look into ourselves, to see for what disease in us this medicine has been sent. All then, pain, sickness, weariness, distress, languor, agony of mind and body, whether in ourselves or others, is to be treated reverently, seeing in it our Maker's hand passing over us, fashioning, by suffering, the imperfect substance of our souls. Every sorrow we meet with is a billow on this world's troublesome sea,

which we must cross upon the Cross, to bear us nearer to our home: we may not then remain where we were; we may not, when "God's waves and storms have gone over us," be what we were before; we may and must bear our parts in the world's duties; but not as we did in its joys, for each trouble is meant to relax the world's hold over us, and our hold upon the world; each loss to make us seek our gain in heaven; each bereavement to fix our hearts above, where we hope the treasures lent us are removed: each chastisement to deepen our repentance for those sins for which God has so chastened us. Sadder far than the sight of any sorrow is it to see persons, after sorrow, become in all outward show what they were before; even as the impassive waters are troubled for a while by the stone which severs them, and then become calm and cold as heretofore; sadder far for it seems like casting aside God's healing hand, and rising up from under it when He is laying low. Rather it is a Christian's joy, and comfort, and peace, and health, when God has laid him low, there to lie—humble, in proportion as God has humbled him; to lie low at the foot of His Cross, trusting, that by virtue of that Cross, He will raise up those who lie willingly where He has placed them.

When God calleth the Christian to work in His vineyard, his answer is not, "I go, sir, and he goeth not;" but there is, instead, the cheerful, child-like confiding obedience of the young Samuel, "Speak for thy servant heareth." And so, in every dispensation of Providence, there is the same child-like trust in his Father's wisdom; the same conviction that his Father cannot mislead, and will not forsake him: his Father, who from his very cradle has shewn him every mark of love, who has before proved himself both able and willing to save his children to the utmost; his Father, who, when he went forth as a pilgrim into the world, gave him this encouraging promise, "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."

In all our times of affliction let us remember that our heavenly Father has launched us, as it were, on the sea of life: enjoined us to sail onward on a certain track; given us the clearest rules by which we are to steer; appointed a certain haven as the object of our voyage; and He has at the same time promised, that if our faith fail not, we shall neither sink nor perish. It is not ours, then, to choose a nearer port, because the storm is loud, the waves

tempestuous, the voyage perilous. Onward still, must be the Christian's course; onward in faith, onward in prayer. He, who of old time hushed to silence the rude waters of Gennesaret, can say with equal power to the worldly tempest, "Peace, be still;" and He will say it, if it be to our soul's profit; but the storm will blow on, if He sees that it bear us, though it may be somewhat roughly, to our desired haven. BISHOP OF TASMANIA.

PSALM XXVII. 5.—In the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion: in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me; He shall set me up upon a rock.

To a thoughtful mind no study can appear more important, than how to be suitably prepared for the misfortunes of life, so as to contemplate them in prospect without dismay; and if they must befal, to bear them without dejection. We are informed in the text of a pavilion, which God erects to shelter His servants in the time of trouble, of a secret place in His tabernacle into which He brings them, of a rock on which He sets them up; and elsewhere He tells us of a shield and buckler which He spreads before them, to cover them from the terror by night, and the arrow that flieth by day. Now of what nature are those instruments of de-

fence, which God is represented as providing with such solicitous care for those who fear Him? The defence which religion provides is altogether of an internal kind. It is the *heart*, not the outward state, which it professes to guard. When the time of trouble comes, as come it must to all, it places good men under the pavilion of the Almighty, by affording them that security and peace which arise from the belief of the divine protection. It brings them into the secret of His tabernacle, by opening to them sources of consolation which are hidden from others. By that strength of mind with which it endows them, it sets them up upon a rock, against which the tempest may violently beat, but which it cannot shake. Religion gradually prepares the mind of the Christian for all the events of this inconstant state; it instructs him in the nature of true happiness; it early weans him from the undue love of the world, by discovering to him its vanity, and by setting higher prospects in his view. Afflictions do not attack him by surprise, and therefore do not overwhelm him. He was equipped for the storm as well as the calm, in this dubious navigation of life. Under those conditions he knew himself to be brought hither, that he was not to retain always the enjoyment of what he loved; and therefore he is not overcome with grief when that which is

mortal dies; when that which is unstable begins to change; and when that which he knew to be transient passes away. He is accustomed to look up to that supreme Providence which disposes of human affairs, not with reverence only, but with trust and hope. The time of prosperity was to him not merely a season of barren joy, but productive of much useful improvement. He had cultivated his mind, he had stored it with useful knowledge, with good principles and virtuous dispositions. These resources remain entire when the days of trouble come. They remain with him in sickness, as in health; in poverty, as in the midst of riches; in his dark and solitary hours no less than when surrounded with friends and gay society. His chief pleasures were always of the calm, innocent, and temperate kind; and over these the changes of the world have the least power. His mind is a kingdom to him, and he can still enjoy it. The world did not bestow upon him all his enjoyment, and therefore it is not in the power of the world, by its most cruel attacks, to carry them all away. BLAIR.

OF all the thoughts which can enter into the mind in the season of distress, the belief of an interest in His favour, who rules the world, is the most

soothing. Every form of religion has afforded to virtuous men some degree of this consolation. But it was reserved for the Christian revelation, to carry it to the highest point. For it is the direct scope of that revelation, to accommodate itself to the circumstances of man, under two main views: as guilty in the sight of God, and as struggling with the evils of the world. Under the former, it discovers to him a Mediator and an atonement: under the latter, it promises him the spirit of grace and consolation. It is a system of complete relief, extended from our spiritual to our temporal distresses. The same Hand which holds out forgiveness to the penitent, and assistance to the frail, dispenses comfort and hope to the afflicted. It deserves particular notice, that there is no character which God more frequently assumes to Himself in the sacred writings, than that of the patron of the distressed. Compassion is that attribute of His nature, which He has chosen to place in the greatest variety of lights, on purpose that he might accommodate His Majesty to our weakness, and provide a cordial for human griefs. He is the hearer of all prayers; but with particular attention He is represented as listening to the cry of the poor, and regarding the prayer of the destitute. All His creatures He governs with justice and wisdom; but

He takes to Himself, in a special manner, the charge of executing judment for the oppressed, of protecting the stranger, of delivering him who hath no helper from the hand of the spoiler. "For the oppression of the poor, and for the sighing of the needy will I arise, saith the Lord, to set him in safety from him that puffeth at him. He is the Father of the fatherless, and the Judge of the widow, in His holy habitation. He raiseth them up that are bowed down. He dwelleth with the contrite. He healeth the broken in heart. For He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are but dust." If the wisdom of His providence saw it necessary to place so many of His creatures in an afflicted state, that state, however, He commiserates. He disdains not to point out Himself as the refuge of the virtuous and pious; and to unite them, amidst all their troubles, to pour out their hearts before Him. Those circumstances which estrange others from them, interest Him the more in their situation. No obscurity conceals them from His notice; and though they should be forgotten by every friend on earth, they are remembered by the God of heaven. That sigh which is heard by no human ear, is listened to by Him; and that tear is remarked, which falls unnoticed or despised by the world.

From the "secret place of the tabernacle" he hears this voice issue: "Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will answer thee. Fear not, for I am with thee. Be not dismayed, for I am thy God." And as he hears a voice which speaks to none but the pure in heart, so he beholds a hand which sinners cannot see. He beholds the hand of Providence conducting all the hidden springs and movements of the universe; and with a secret, but unerring operation, directing every event towards the happiness of the righteous. Those afflictions, which appear to others the messengers of the wrath of heaven, appear to him the ministers of sanctification and wisdom. Where they discern nothing but the horrors of the tempest which surrounds them, His more enlightened eye beholds the Angel who rides in the whirlwind, and directs the storm. Hence a peace keeping the mind and heart, which is nowhere to be found but under the pavilion of the Almighty. BLAIR.

WHEN life is going smoothly on—when its surface is calm, its course easy and prosperous—when nothing further seems to be called for than a respect for religion and religious observances, and that it should be made to contribute to a Sunday

or festival attendance on divine service, the want of an inward and vital principle of godliness is not so apparent. But in seasons of deep and heartfelt sorrow, in the hour of distress and bitter disappointment, or in the unguarded moments of turbulent passion, of resentment, and hatred, at such times a *religious* principle is especially required for guidance and restraint: yet how seldom, in such cases, does a religious feeling supply the proper motive for action—seldom that, under such circumstances, men are found prepared to meet their trials as members of Christ's body, or as His followers and disciples. Every one must feel that it is a real, not a nominal, Christian profession on which they must depend in the time of trial, in the hour of death, and at the day of judgment. The works of faith—the labours of love, therefore, which belong to us as members of Christ, must be carried on without delay; from the morning of life to its close; not reserved for the languor of disease and the infirmities of age, but in the freshest years of life—the days of its health and strength, its energy of mind and body. Not in the pain and weakness of a sick-bed, or the distraction of a death-bed scene, but in the calm hours of a composed spirit and a collected mind. In fact, we must be *always* ready. DEAN RAMSAY.

Afflictions, even the severest, are appointed means of sanctification, which I am persuaded is as great a mystery as our justification. We know little of the nourishing of the natural body, how it is brought about; and how can we comprehend the nourishing of the soul? This thought should teach us to live by faith, and to yield ourselves willingly, without disputing, to the Spirit's method with us, though some of the means may be in their nature trying. *From a Writer in the last century.*

1 Thess. iv. 13, 14.—I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.

This passage is the one alluded to in the Burial Service when it is said, our merciful God hath taught us by His holy apostle, St. Paul, not to be sorry, as men without hope, for them that sleep in Him. I propose now to consider the nature of the hope which is thus represented as affording comfort in bereavement, and as alleviating the sorrows of separation. The ground of "hope" and "comfort" held out to the Thessalonians was this: not only

that the faithful dead should rise again, and be made partakers of Christ's eternal kingdom; but that such of their pious friends as had been separated from them by death should be re-united to them, and that they should recognise them, and should rejoice *together* in the presence of the Lord. I think, then, we may legitimately infer from the teaching of St. Paul, that they who have known and loved each other on earth, will be permitted to recognise, and to love each other in heaven. Still, when we consider the extent to which many persons appear to keep out of sight in their estimate of future bliss, that the knowledge and vision of God is its *chiefest* privilege, and how they allow themselves to dwell on their re-union with departed friends as the thing in which their happiness will consist, and to which all else will be subordinate; when passing by or only giving an inferior place to the thought that heaven is the abode of the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier,—one God blessed for ever:—and that to see and know Him as He is, and to know even as they are known; to be able to comprehend somewhat of the depths of His power, and wisdom, and mercy, and love; to contemplate His majesty, and to be themselves still advancing onward in knowledge, and holiness, and purity, and peace; when setting little or no store by such joys

as these, they contract their narrow aspirations to mere hope of reviving again in heaven those social and domestic attachments in which they have found their chief solace on earth; we cannot wonder that God, who knoweth the hearts of men, should have said but little in His holy Word on the subject of our mutual recognition of each other in a future state. Still, in saying this, I am not denying that the doctrine is to be found in the Bible; nor that, in its proper place, our reception of it may not tend to make us better and happier both here and hereafter. The object of the apostle being to "comfort" those who had been separated from their friends by death, he sets before them the doctrine of the future meeting between the quick and the dead at the Lord's coming, in words which would utterly fail to convey comfort, unless they conveyed at the same time the notion that the persons who so meet would recognise each other—as well be separated for ever, as be in each other's presence without mutual recognition. You have already heard of St. Paul's declaration to the Thessalonians, that they would be "His crown of rejoicing in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming." A similar turn of expression he makes use of in his Epistle to the Corinthians: "We are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours in the day of the Lord

Jesus." To the Philippians he speaks of rejoicing on *their* account in the day of Christ. To the Colossians, writing to them of Christ in them the hope of glory, he adds, "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." Now, how could he present them unless he knew them? And how could he rejoice in them, unless he had the means certified of their salvation? and whence could he gain that knowledge, except as a *witness* of their final acceptance?

It is true, St. Paul tells us "We shall all be changed;" but it seems evident, from the language of the context, that the charge there spoken of is that from corruption to incorruption, from mortality to immortality; and does not refer to any loss of personal identity or self-consciousness on our own part, or to any thing which may prevent our being known by others. As our blessed Lord, when He was transfigured, was still known to His disciples, in spite of the change which came upon Him, so when He shall "change our vile bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto His glorious body," it is reasonable to expect that they will still so far preserve the lineaments of what they were, as to be recognisable by those upon whom a similar change has passed. Lastly, with reference to the

objection which has been sometimes made to the probability of our future recognition of each other, on the score that such recognition would be incompatible with a state of perfect happiness, since our own lot, and that of some whom we have loved, may be cast in different worlds, and the thoughts of distress from their misery would interfere with the joys of heaven: it may be observed, first, that the saints in bliss can will nothing but what God wills; their love for righteousness will have subdued all other love: to be overwhelmed, therefore, by any excess of sorrow, because "God will by no means spare the guilty," would indicate a repining spirit, and a degree of imperfection irreconcilable with the condition of an inhabitant of heaven; and, secondly, that there seems no reason why there may not be a holy sorrow felt even in heaven for things that deserve sorrow; but all bitterness of sorrow will be lost in adoring love and gratitude. These, however, and such like matters, we may safely leave in faith to the disposal of an all-merciful God. Nevertheless, reflection on them will not be impractical and without its profit, if it lead us to love one another, to be forbearing with one another, to be honest with one another, to lay open our hearts to one another, to pray for one another, to intercede for one another, to live as

those who know that a day is coming in which all the thoughts of our hearts will be revealed, to pass the time of our sojourning together now as those who desire to be companions throughout the endless ages of eternity. But above all, it will not be unprofitable to us, if it lead us to the conviction that our first and chiefest duty is to love God, to seek His favour, and to desire to be united to Him, to feel that it would be the worst of all evils to be separated from Him, to aspire after heaven, as being the place where He for ever dwells, and to count all things subordinate to this, that we may win Christ, and be found in Him on that day when He maketh up His jewels!

RECOGNITION IN THE AGE TO COME.

Rev. xxii. 5.—There shall be no night.

In discussing this text in a previous lecture, I viewed it as a prediction of the perfection of that state to which the Church is progressively approaching. On this occasion, I am anxious to look at the prediction in another of its aspects, and to answer, in this light, the question, Shall the saved, in their resurrection bodies, and amid millennial light, recognise each other just as clearly and distinctly as they do now? "I go," says the Saviour;

"to prepare a place for you;" and "I will come again, and receive you to myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." And again, He prays, "Father, I will that those thou hast given me be with me, that they may behold my glory." We are to be gathered together unto Him, and to be presented "a glorious church, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." The resurrection, whether it respects the lost, or the people of God, is not a re-creation of humanity, or the restoration of mankind in the mass, but the resurrection, or rising again, in purity, in beauty, and in glory, of all that was deposited in the grave. The same body that fell shall rise; this mortal shall put on immortality; this corruptible, incorruptibility; and just as the body which Jesus laid in the tomb was the same body with which He rose from the dead so shall it be with ours. Now if all our faculties be raised, memory will be restored and resuscitated with the rest. Its essential function is recollection, its aspect is retrospective. It deals only with the past; it is a storehouse of facts. There is abundant evidence that there will be remembrance, and therefore, memory, in the age to come. Gratitude, which will then be so deeply felt, and vividly expressed, implies recollection of benefits received. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus indicates

that memory will have its part and its power in the punishment of the lost; it is surely not unreasonable to suppose that it will have a share in contributing to the joys of the blessed. The words of our Lord, addressed to his own, "I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; thirsty, and ye gave me drink," is an appeal to the memories of His own. Shall we recollect the truths that first kindled in our hearts the joys of heaven, and have no recollection of the instrument, however humble, that conveyed them to our hearts, and interested us in them? Can we have walked together to the house of God, and taken sweet counsel together; and yet have no recollection of voices that were familiar to us as household words, and features with which we were intimately acquainted as with our own? If, then, we recollect in the future dispensation those we knew and loved in the present, shall we be prevented from seeing them? Are we not told that death shall be destroyed? But if those bonds which were broken at death are not restored again in the realms of life, death is not annihilated; one of its deepest wounds survives: its heaviest blow is felt throughout a futurity to come. But this cannot be. I look on the future as the restoration of scattered families, of suspended friendships, of broken circles; the reanimation of departed images. Such

a prospect should influence us in the formation of our friendships upon earth. We ought to seek the circle of our friends in the circle of Christians. We should found our friendship, not mainly on identity of taste or pursuit, but mainly on Christian character. Baxter says, "The expectation of loving my friends hereafter, principally kindles my love to them on earth. If I thought I should never know them, and, consequently, never love them, after this life is ended, I should number them with temporal things, and love them as such; but I now converse with Christian friends in a firm persuasion that I shall converse with them for ever. I take comfort in the loss of the dead, or absent, believing I shall shortly meet them in heaven."

CUMMING.

REV. VII. 9.—After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.

THESE words present a beautiful description of the happiness of saints in heaven; a subject on which it is, at all times, and especially under our present affliction, comfortable and improving to meditate.

What the words of the text most obviously suggest is, that heaven is to be considered as a state of blessed society. *A multitude*, a numerous assembly, are here represented as sharing together the same felicity. The pleasure of earthly society, like all our other pleasures, is extremely imperfect; and can give us a very faint conception of the joy that must arise from the society of perfect spirits in a happier world. There are two circumstances which particularly enhance the blessedness of that multitude who stand before the throne; these are access to the most exalted society, and removal of the most tender connexions. The former is pointed out in Scripture by joining the "innumerable company of angels, and the general assembly and church of the firstborn;" by sitting down with "Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven." United to this high assembly, the blessed at the same time renew those ancient connexions with virtuous friends which had been dissolved by death. The prospect of this awakens in the heart the most pleasing sentiment which perhaps can fill it in this mortal state. For of all the sorrows which we are here doomed to endure, none is so bitter as that occasioned by the fatal stroke which separates us, in appearance for ever, from those to whom either nature or friendship had intimately joined our hearts. In

these moments how relieving the thought that the separation is only temporary, not eternal; that there is a time to come of re-union with those with whom our happiest days were spent; whose joys and sorrows once were ours; and from whom, after we shall have landed on the peaceful shore where they dwell, no revolutions of nature shall ever be able to part us more! Such is the society of the blessed above. Of such are the multitude composed who "stand before the throne." Let us now observe, that this is not only a blessed but a numerous society. It is called a *multitude, a great multitude which no man could number.* These expressions convey the most enlarged views of the kingdom of glory. Dismay not yourselves with the apprehension of heaven being a confined and almost inaccessible region, into which it is barely possible for a small handful to gain admission, after making their escape from the general wreck of the human race. "In my Father's house," said our Saviour, "there are many mansions." That city of the living God towards which you profess to bend your course is prepared for the reception of citizens innumerable. It already abounds with inhabitants; and more and more shall be added to it until the end of time. Whatever difficulties there are in the way which leads to it, they have been often sur-

mounted; the path, though narrow, is neither impassable nor untrodden.

The heavenly society is represented in the text as gathered out of all the varieties of the human race. This is intimated by the remarkable expressions of a multitude which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds, and people and tongues, as if designed on purpose to correct our narrow notions of the extent and power of divine grace. They whom distant seas and regions now divide, whose languages and manners are at present strange to one another, shall then mingle in the same assembly. No situation is so remote, and no station so unfavourable, as to preclude access to the heavenly felicity. A road is opened by the divine Spirit to those blissful habitations, from all comers of the earth, and from all conditions of human life; from the peopled city, and from the solitary desert; from the cottages of the poor, and from the palaces of kings; from the dwellings of ignorance and simplicity, and from the regions of science and improvement. "They shall come," says our blessed Lord Himself, "from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God." Such discoveries serve to enlarge our conceptions of the extent of divine goodness, and to remove those fears which are ready

to arise from particular situations in life. Were you permitted to draw aside the veil, and to view that diversified assembly of the blessed who surround the throne, you would behold among them numbers who have overcome the same difficulties which encounter you, and which you dread as insuperable. You would behold there the uninstructed with whom an upright intention supplied the place of knowledge; the feeble, whom Divine grace had strengthened; and the misled, whom it brought back into the right path. You would behold many whom want could not tempt to dishonesty; many whom riches did not seduce into pride or impiety; many who, in the most difficult and ensnaring circumstances, had preserved unsullied integrity. In a word, *from all kindreds and people*—that is, from all ranks of life, and all tribes of men, you would behold those whom Divine assistance had conducted to future glory. And is not the same assistance, in its full extent, offered also to us? From the happy multitude above there issues a voice which ought to sound perpetually in the ear of faith: Be ye faithful unto death, and ye shall receive the crown of life; be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might; be followers of us, who, through faith and patience, are now inheriting the promises.

BLAIR.

When David's little child was ill, heavy was his grief, and strong his pleading, that his child of sin, and prayers, and tears, might be spared to him. When he perceived that God would not hear his prayer, and that the little one was dead, he arose from his place and posture of mourning, he dried his tears, he resumed his usual occupations, "he came into the house of the Lord, and worshipped." His reason for this extraordinary conduct was given in his answer to his attendants, who probably thought that grief had unsettled their royal master's mind; "while the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live. But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? *I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.*" Where would have been the comfort of this knowledge, unless he had known as well, that, when he went to him, he should be able to recognise, though after the lapse of many a year, the loved one he had lost? This persuasion of David would seem to indicate that our remembrance of each other will be as much strengthened hereafter as any other faculty or kind of knowledge. Again, the first source of comfort that our Lord gave to His disciples, on that night of sorrow when their hearts were troubled for His prophesied

departure, was a promise that their personal intercourse should be renewed in heaven. "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." As these words were meant to reconcile them to their temporary loss, ill would they have been calculated for that purpose, if they were not permitted to understand them in their literal sense as holding out the certainty of mutual recognition, and mutual congratulations, in the possession of the blessed privilege of being for ever with their Lord. St. Paul seems to have understood the promises in this sense, when he expressed his confidence of being with Christ at His departure from this world. We may conclude, then, that those dear ties of kindred, of friendship, or of affection, which are given us in this world to gladden the otherwise toilsome hours of our pilgrimage, will be interrupted only, not destroyed by death. We may surely believe, that all who sleep in Jesus will rise again with Him, as one glad redeemed family, to meet to part no more; to know, to understand, to love afresh. But, even as their bodies will undergo that mysterious change, which is to mould them anew in the likeness of the

glorified Saviour, so, too, will it be with the better part, the soul; that will be changed as well, its affections spiritualised and refined, purified from all earthly dross, freed from the selfishness, the passion, the animal feeling, the liability to sin. It will be like Adam's spirit, when he first came from his Creator's hands, made after God's image, after His likeness, and made to endure in that resemblance throughout eternity. And do we indeed believe that it will be given to the godly once more to renew, and that for ever, those ties which earthly affection has made passing dear, and which spiritualised love will render well-nigh holy? Then, if we are truly anxious to secure the privilege of abiding with Christ and His redeemed flock in eternity, must we walk throughout this our pilgrimage even as He walked. Like Him, we must live in the world, yet above the world; like Him, we must fight against the several enemies of the soul of man; like Him, become meek, patient, humble, pure, forgiving; like Him, we must be holy, merciful, and resigned to all the trials of our earthly lot. It is enough: the disciple must study and copy his Master's bright example here, before he can hope to be admitted hereafter into the everlasting fellowship of his accepted brethren.

BISHOP OF TASMANIA.

In the state of separation, before the soul be re-invested with her new house, the spirits of all persons are with God. So secured and so blessed, and so sealed up for glory, that this state of interval and imperfection is in respect of its certain event and end infinitely more desirable than all the riches, and all the pleasures, and all the vanities, and all the kingdoms of this world.

JEREMY TAYLOR.

ON THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.

PSALM XVI. 10.—Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

ALTHOUGH from the foundation of the Christian Church the descent of Christ into hell was thoroughly received by the faithful, it was not formally professed as a point of necessary belief until a later period. With reference to the profession of faith in Christ, one main object of the Creed, after establishing His Godhead, seems to be, to shew that He was in all things "made like unto His brethren, Yet, without sin" (Hebrews ii. 17; iv. 15). It asserts there that, like them, He was born of a woman; lived, suffered, and died, and was buried as a man: and further, it means evidently to say that

after death His soul, even as that of a man, was separated from His body; the latter to repose in the grave until His resurrection; the former to descend to that invisible place where the spirits are constrained to abide until their re-union with their fleshly tabernacle. The humanity of Christ is thus kept distinctly in view from His birth even to His resurrection. The fact of the descent into hell is sufficiently proved by the 16th Psalm,—a mystical prayer spoken by David, in the character of High Priest prophetically, "in the hope of that priesthood which was to come into his family in the person of his descendant." The prophet there speaking, as the Messiah, expresses his confidence that his soul shall not be left in hell, and that his flesh shall not see corruption. There can be no doubt that this passage refers to Christ: for St. Peter, in his first Sermon on the day of Pentecost, after having quoted the passage alluded to, does so apply it (see Acts ii. 25th to 31st verse). The fact of Christ's descent into hell being thus established in Scripture, let us endeavour to ascertain, from the same source, what kind of hell it was to which our Saviour went; and this will go far to settle what was the class of persons with whom for that brief season He remained. Much of the existing difference of opinion, respecting the right interpretation of this

clause in our creed, has arisen from the poverty of our language, which possesses no single word answering to the Hebrew *Sheol*, and the Greek *Hades*,—both of which words convey much the same meaning, namely, *the invisible place of departed souls;* the English word *hell*, derived from the Saxon *hele*, signifies much the same thing, and in that sense is frequently used in our translation of the New Testament. But language has altered, and in these days the word "hell" scarcely conveys any other meaning than that of the place of torment where the spirits of the lost pay the penalty of their transgressions in the flesh. "This certainly," says Bishop Horsley, "was *not* the hell to which the soul of Christ descended: He descended to hell properly so called; to the invisible mansion of departed spirits: and to that part of it where the souls of the faithful, when they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are in joy and felicity." When the penitent thief on the cross recognised and acknowledged Christ as the Son of God, whilst Jew and Gentile were adding to His agony by mockeries and taunts, his prayer of faith was, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." The Saviour's answer was: "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Here is a distinct promise, that on that very day the soul of

the repentant felon should accompany the Saviour's soul to Paradise. What is Paradise? Twice is this word used in other passages of Scripture, and in both cases we can only assign to it a meaning expressive of some place beyond this world, under God's protection, the inhabitants of which repose in the enjoyment of His favour. Thither then was the soul of the thief, together with that of the Saviour, conveyed; to a receptacle of departed spirits in communion with God: for it would have been a punishment, not a blessing, had his soul been compelled to accompany that of Jesus to a place of torment, as some would have us believe, was the hell to which He went.

There are other passages of Scripture which prove to us that the souls of those who die in the Lord are, immediately upon their separation from the body, ushered into a state of blessedness, where they are bidden to repose until the judgment day; and thus we are enabled to answer many points of anxious interest connected with that intermediate state. In that touching passage in Ecclesiastes, where the miseries and discomforts of old age are depicted, the royal preacher concludes the description with a revelation of what is to take place when death has closed the scene: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall

return to God who gave it." Such was the belief of the inspired men of God, under a dispensation confessedly imperfect: but when He appeared, who "brought life and immortality to light through the gospel," it is natural to suppose that He would give us a clearer revelation of the most important points connected with our future state; and we are not disappointed in this hope. The well known parable of the rich man and Lazarus speaks, as plainly as language can speak, of a place assigned to each class of spirits, the wicked and the good, when their earthly trial shall have closed for ever: a place in which they receive such blessings or such woes, as may give them a foretaste of their future position, as it will be irrevocably settled at the judgment day: Lazarus is in "Abraham's bosom," into which at his death he was "carried by the angels." An expression which would, perhaps, warrant us in concluding, that those ministering spirits are, indeed, commissioned to keep watch around the bed of departing Christians. He is in company with the spirits of the good and godly of every age: not in the Father's presence, not yet admitted into the fulness of those joys "which God hath prepared for them that love Him;" not yet ushered into "that perfect consummation of bliss, both of body and soul," to which our Liturgy

alludes. It would, therefore, seem that the perfection of our happiness and of our misery is reserved unto that hour, when the body shall be re-united to the soul: If they have been purified together in this world, together will they be also glorified, when Christ shall come to gather His own unto His eternal kingdom. If together they have sinned, they will be punished together, when they hear those awful words, "Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." BISHOP OF TASMANIA.

WHAT are the precise occupations of the "spirits of the just made perfect," we, indeed, know not, nor could we, perhaps, comprehend them. It is sufficient for us to rest assured, that they are occupied in that work for which they are best qualified. It is sufficient for us to know, that whatever the employments are, which their Creator and Redeemer assigns to them, they are such as must tend to promote the greatest happiness, and to excite new and continual praises to God; for in every description which is given us of the heavenly world, it is the voice of incessant praise and thanksgiving we hear; it is the overflowing of thankfulness for a state of exquisite enjoyment; it is the

universal burst of gratitude, extending from one boundary of heaven to the other. The voice of prayer itself is lost in the exultations of praise; the language of complaint is unknown; the lamentations of sorrow, and the sighs of grief, are never heard. VENN'S SERMONS.

WE know little of the state of departed souls, because such knowledge is not necessary to a good life. Reason deserts us at the brink of the grave, and can give no further intelligence. *Revelation is not wholly silent.* "There is joy in the angels of heaven, over one sinner that repenteth;" and surely this joy is not incommunicable to souls disentangled from the body, and made like angels. Let hope, therefore, dictate what revelation does not confute, that the union of souls may still remain; and that we who are struggling with sin, sorrow, and infirmities, may have our part in the attention and kindness of those who have finished their course, and are now receiving their reward. Surely there is no man who, thus afflicted, does not seek succour in the gospel, which has brought life and immortality to light. Real alleviation of the loss of friends, and rational tranquillity in the prospect of our own dissolution, can be received only from the

promises of Him, in whose hands are life and death, and from the assurance of another and a better state, in which all tears shall be wiped from the eyes, and the whole soul shall be filled with joy.

DR. JOHNSON.

How rich and how adequate is the provision which God has made for our consolation in all our afflictions, in giving us a Redeemer, who suffered, that we might be delivered; who was oppressed and afflicted, that we might be supported; who died, but is now alive, and lives for evermore. Death may deprive us of our friends here, but it cannot deprive us of this our best friend. We have this best of friends, this mighty Redeemer to go to in all our afflictions; and He is not one who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; He has suffered far greater sorrows than we have ever suffered; and if we are actually united to Him, the union can never be broken, but will continue when we die, and when heaven and earth are dissolved. Therefore, in this we may be confident, though the earth be removed, in Him we shall triumph with everlasting joy. Now, when storms and tempests arise, we may resort to Him, who is a hiding-place from the storm, and a covert from the tempest. When we thirst, we may come to Him who is as

rivers of water in a dry place. When we are weary, we may go to Him who is as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Christ said to His disciples, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but in me ye shall have peace." If we are united to Him, we shall be like a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out its roots by the rivers, that shall not see when heat cometh; but its leaf shall ever be green, and it shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall it cease from yielding fruit. He will now be our light in darkness, our morning star, shining as the sure harbinger of approaching day. In a little time he will arise on our souls, as the sun in his glory; and our sun shall no more go down, and there shall be no interposing cloud, no veil in his face, or on our hearts; but our Lord shall be our everlasting light, and our Redeemer our glory.

How blessed and happy is your lot, yes, even in your hour of trial, if you know what it is to go near to God in prayer, and are acquainted with the throne of grace. The promises of God, which are yea and amen in Jesus, are sufficient to answer all your necessities, and to sweeten the bitterest cup which your heavenly Father will ever put into your

hand. He has said, when thou passest through the fire, I will be with thee, and when through the floods they shall not overflow thee. You have need of such a word as this, and He knows your need of it, and the time of necessity is the time when He will be sure to appear in behalf of those who trust in Him. He is the Friend of the widow. and the Father of the fatherless, even God in His holy habitation; in all our afflictions He is afflicted and chastens us in mercy. Surely He will sanctify this dispensation to you, do you great and everlasting good by it, and open to your view the glories of a better country, where there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor pain, but God shall wipe away all tears from your eyes for ever. Oh, that comfortable word, "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction;" so that our very sorrows are evidences of our calling, and He chastens us because we are His children.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER TO ONE DEPRIVED OF MANY CHILDREN.

This trial is, indeed, severe; and there will be need of all the wisdom and grace you have, to enable you to bear and improve it aright. You must bear it in silence and submission. Surely it is meet

to be said unto God, I have borne chastisement. He is sovereign Lord of all, and may do with us and ours as pleaseth Him. It is not for the clay to quarrel with the potter. It was a mercy you had children, and comfort with them so long; it is a mercy that yet you have one another; and your children are not lost, but gone before, a little before, whither you yourselves are hastening after. Your children are taken away from the evil to come, and you must not mourn as they that have no hope. Sensible you cannot but be, but dejected and sullen you must not be; that will but put more bitterness into the cup, and make way for another, perhaps a severer stroke. You must not think that there cannot be a severer stroke; for God hath many arrows in His quiver; He can heat the furnace seven times hotter, till He hath consumed us; and if He should do so, yet still we must say, He hath punished us less than our iniquities have deserved. In examples of patience we have two eminent ones in the Book of God; those are Job and Aaron: of the latter it is said, "He held his peace;" and that which quieted him, was what his brother Moses said to him, "This is that which the Lord hath said, I will be sanctified;" and, if God be sanctified, Aaron is satisfied; if God have glory from it, Aaron hath nothing to say against it. Of the former it is said,

he fell down, but it was to worship: and we are told how he expressed himself. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." He acknowledgeth God in all; and indeed this is it that you must satisfy yourselves with under this sad providence, that the Lord hath done it, and the same will that ordered the thing itself, ordered all the circumstances of it; and who are we that we should dispute with our Maker? "Let the potsherds strive with the potsherds of the earth, but let not the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Affliction should be a spur to you, to put you on in heaven's way; it may be, you were growing remiss in duty, beginning to slack your former pace in religion, and your heavenly Father saw it and was grieved at it; and sent this sad providence to be your monitor, to tell you, you should remember whence you are fallen, and do your first works, and be more humble, and holy, and heavenly, self-denying, and watchful, abounding always in the work of the Lord. Affliction should be a means of drawing your hearts and thoughts more upwards and homewards; I mean your everlasting home. You should be looking oftener now than before into the other world. "I shall go to Him," saith David, when his little son was gone before. It is

yet but a little while ere all the things of time shall be swallowed up in eternity. And it matters not whether we or ours die first, while we are all dying; in the midst of life we are in death:—"What manner of persons, then ought we to be?" Now, our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God even our Father, be your support under, and do you good by this dispensation, and give you a name better than that of sons and daughters.

CHRIST OUR HELP IN TRIALS AND AFFLICTIONS.

The real believer is desirous of living to the glory of God, and therefore of acting agreeably to his calling, and suitably to the duties of his station. He would live in the exercises of faith and love; he would be lively in devotion, earnest in prayer, and ardent in praise; he would be patient in trial, diligent in duties, and active in services; but when he would do good, evil is present with him, and he feels a law in his members warring against the law of his mind. In himself, that is, in his flesh, dwelleth no good thing; who, then, shall deliver him from the body of sin and death, and confirm him in the glorious liberty of the children of God? Never will he be better; never will he obtain any aid but by looking unto Jesus, and out of His

fulness he must receive grace for grace; for he alone of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. The living branch must be united to the living vine; it must abide in the vine if it ever become fruitful, for separate from it the branch itself will soon wither and decay. The stream must be constantly supplied from the ever-flowing fountain, or the stream itself will be dried up; but the branch, abiding in the vine, will bring forth much fruit; and the stream constantly supplied from the fountain, will flow unceasingly, and spread its different currents to refresh and beautify the surrounding fields. If we were living more by the faith of the Son of God, we should have a more abundant discovery of His glories and His grace, and should thus bring them more into exercise and enjoyment. Let the prayer of faith be continually entreating the supplies of grace, from Him who is full of grace and truth, in whom all fulness dwells, and who is the head and root of His believing people; and the promise of God secures the supply in rich communication to the glory of His name, and to the comfort and safety of our souls.

The history of the Bible is known, or may be known, to all that can read; and here is a lapse of

some thousand years for the mind to explore, but few, comparatively speaking, send their thoughts to those past ages; the present, though so rapidly passing by us, seems to fix all our thoughts, to prompt all our wishes, and too frequently is the boundary of all our hopes. God formed us capable of attaining happiness, and though He does not allow us to taste it unalloyed here, yet He holds it out in future in colours so radiant, so distinct to the eye of the faithful, that it is capable of cheering every sorrowful, every painful hour we can know here below. But we are heedless, unreflecting beings; we fail to use the light God has endued us with, and then complain of the fancied hardships to which we are exposed. Evils, indeed, there are in this life, and very bitter they are at the moment we experience them; but in the most sorrowful life there are intervals of repose allowed, in which we may look into the great scheme of providence, see the plan and views of our great Maker, and acknowledge the wisdom and mercy of His government.

God, who gathered all our fathers, will gather us ere long to them in his glory. If our relatives, our dearest relatives, be dead as to this world, they now thank God that they are so; and we may be re-

minded of the promise of our gracious Saviour, which assures us, that, respecting our souls and the souls of all the faithful, they never shall, they never can, so much as see, or taste of death. Why then should we sorrow as those who have no hope? We ought to be ashamed of our selfish grief, and to beseech of God that He would at least turn it into tranquil resignation, if not into praises and joy. God hath wonderfully supported His people in all their extremities; and if thou art one of them why not thee? The youngest child may claim his father's bounty and blessing, though he may not enjoy so large a portion as the firstborn. Trust, then, to the Lord; and entreat Him to subdue in thy heart all the passionate and perplexing tempests of disordered nature. The intended effect of these solemn dispensations to thyself is to wean thee from time, and to set thy face towards heaven. There thou hast many friends indeed, and one great Friend above all, who can never be lost; nor can the others when met, be separated from thee again. They are thy friends, in that holy and unchanging region, not for such a shadow of a moment as thy time is here, but for a blissful and boundless eternity. It was a noble saying of one over a dear departed friend: "There he lies, and with him all my worldly comfort; but yet, if the moving of a

straw could bring him to life again, without the will of my God, I would not be the mover of that straw for a thousand worlds." May we be like-minded; and instead of too much bewailing the departure of friends to heaven, let it be one great object of our lives and faith to follow them thither, that we may enjoy together with them the common portion of the redeemed, even the everlasting inheritance of the saints in light. SERLE.

WOULD you be quiet, and have peace within in troublous times? Keep near to God, beware of anything that may interpose betwixt you and your confidence. It is good for me, says the Psalmist, to be near God; not only to draw near, but to keep near, to cleave to Him, and dwell in Him. Oh, the sweet calm of such a soul amidst all storms. Thus, once trusting and fixed, then no more fear; he is not afraid of evil tidings; the heart is not afraid of the news of it, because it is fixed, trusting in the Lord. Can anything so ennoble and elevate the spirit of a man as to contemplate and converse with the pure and ever-blessed Father of spirits? Beg that you may know Him, that He would reveal Himself to you; for otherwise no teaching can make Him known. Pray for His quickening know-

ledge, such a knowledge as will effectually work this happy fear and trust. LEIGHTON.

NOTHING makes so strong and healthful a constitution of soul as pure love; it dares submit to God, and resign itself to Him; it dares venture itself in His hand, and trust His word, and seeks no more than how to please Him. A heart thus composed, goes readily and cheerfully unto all services, to do, to suffer, to live, to die, at His pleasure; and firmly stands to this, that nothing can separate it from that which is sufficient for it, which is all its happiness, the love of God in Christ Jesus.

LEIGHTON.

MY heart, as well as the Scriptures, assure me that the judgments of God are right, and that in faithfulness He afflicts me; I have religion to cheer me, and the hopes of heaven to animate me. I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed to him.

AN EXTRACT TAKEN FROM THE MEMORIAL OF THE LAST ILLNESS AND DEATH OF——

I NEVER attended a death bed where there was so little gloom. I have never beheld a nobler exhibi-

tion of Christian calmness under trouble, and of that heavenly serenity, amidst the lengthening shadows of life's closing hours, which remind one of the softness and stillness of a summer evening, when the noise and the toils of human labours have ceased—when the elements of nature appear to be indulging in twilight repose, and when the anticipations of midnight darkness, are brightened with the assurance, that the sun which has set beneath the horizon will rise again in the morning to cheer man onward in the path of life, and to clothe the earth with a fresh mantle of gladness and glory. . . . . .

JOHN XV. 1.—The Vine and the Branches.

I AM the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, He taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit. . . . . Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye except ye abide in me; I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. When our Lord likens Himself to a vine, and His disciples

to the branches, he means to shew to us the state of the Church of Christ. In this vine there are some living branches and some dead ones. So in the Church of Christ, there are some Christians truly alive unto God; while there are many who only have a name to live, but are dead. Now, believers, who are the living branches, are joined to Christ by faith in him. Thus He, together with them, becomes one true vine. He makes them His own; first, by pardoning all their sins; then, by giving to them His own holy nature. He sheds abroad His holy Spirit into their hearts and fills them with life. Just as the juice or sap flows from the root and stems into the branches, so does grace flow from Christ into the hearts of all true believers. And they need this grace afresh every day, "for without Him they can do nothing." If they leave Him for a moment they become weak and helpless. Having, therefore, began to believe in Him, they continually pray for more grace. And this He freely gives them; so that the more they pray, the more their faith increases; and the more their faith increases, so much the more life they have in their souls. They become strong branches, and bear good fruit. They grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This is the happy state of true believers. Let us now

pause a moment, and see how God deals with such believers, in order to make them more and more fruitful. Christ says, "My Father is the husbandman." Now, if you observe the gardener pruning a fruit tree, you will see that he cuts away a great number of long shoots and young boughs, and throws them on the ground as of no use. You would almost think that he was spoiling the tree; but this is the proper way to make the branches that remain fruitful. So, also, does our heavenly Father send many sorrows and trials, in order to make grace more fruitful in us. Affliction is His pruning knife. When the true believer is much afflicted, he should not think that God is cutting him down to nothing. No, He is only cutting away useless branches, in order that the tree may really become more fruitful; that there may be more humility, more diligence and devotion, more resignation, and more love. But in this vine there are some branches which are dead: they stand in their place and seem to belong to the vine; but they have really nothing to do with it. So there are many who call themselves Christians, but to whom Christ will say in the last day, "I never knew you, depart from me, ye workers of iniquity." O then search your heart and life, to see whether you are a true or a false Christian! Judge by your fruits;

and do not flatter yourself for some good actions that you perform: for you might have a few branches of grapes upon a thorn bush; but these would not make a brier a vine. A few good works put on now and then, are only an outside religion. Look into the real state of your heart: and may the Spirit of God shew you what is your true character, and bring you to Christ! JOWETT.

WHOSOEVER stedfastly believes in Jesus under the cross, and experiences under it the Father's love, has fellowship with the Father and the Son by the operation of the Holy Spirit; therefore that sweet grace, which bears up with faith in Jesus, and with patience under the Father's rod, is said to be from Him: "The fruit of the Spirit is long-suffering;" He enables the soul to wait quietly; and if the time be long, and the suffering hard, He gives long patience. He does not take away the sense of pain, but He bestows strength to bear it; and by it He produces a plentiful harvest of graces and blessings. Thus He teaches us Himself, "Now, no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward, it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them who are exercised thereby." These are the fruits of the Spirit; they

are all of His producing; and they are fruits of righteousness which none can produce but those who are one with Christ; and in Him righteous before God. Although sense cannot perceive how they should grow or ripen upon the cross of Christ, yet faith can. The promise is sure. And waiting faith, exercised with suffering, finds many promised fruits. O my soul! consider this precious Scripture, and with close attention. Study it. Treasure it up in thy heart. It contains a rich cordial for the afflicted. Observe, there is love in sending the cross; love to be manifested by it; and heavenly fruits of love to grow upon it. Why, then, is suffering so hard? Why art thou so little profited by it? Is it not generally barren, because thou art not looking to the word of promise, and depending upon the Holy Spirit to give thee the promised fruit? Ask thyself, therefore, especially in the hour of suffering, am I now expecting the communion of the Holy Ghost, that by His grace I may partake with the Son in His salvation, and with the Father in His love? Is this my present experience? There is no bearing the cross without it. Art thou then, O my soul, trusting to Him for this happy fellowship, and hoping, that, as thou art a branch in the vine, and the husbandman is now pruning thee, thou mayest bring forth much fruit? And

observe what kind of fruit it is. All the effects of being in union with Christ, and of having communion with Him, are called fruits of righteousness. Christ is the vine. The branch must be one with Him before it can live and grow—one with Him in His life and death—a partaker of His divine righteousness—and then the branch abiding in Him by the influence of the Holy Spirit will be made fruitful in love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth. He brings forth all the fruit that is to the glory of God—and it is all peaceable fruit, for it is produced by Him in consequence of covenant love, by which the Father is revealed as the God of peace, and the Son as the great peace-maker; and when the Holy Spirit enables the poor sinner to believe this, then He gives him joy and peace in believing: being justified by faith, he has peace with God through Jesus Christ.

Rev. W. Romaine.

Sweet is the comfort which the afflicted receive from God the comforter under the cross; not only *in* suffering but also *after* it. Afterwards also, "it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness." He who carries the cross of Christ does not labour in

vain, and spend his strength for nought; but he is bearing forth good seed. If he sow in tears, yet he shall reap in joy. We are apt to look at the suffering, and forget the fruit. The Lord says, He led His people through the great and terrible wilderness, wherein were flying fiery serpents and scorpions, and drought, that He might humble them, and that He might prove them, to do them good *at the latter end.* He intended to do them good. This was first in His heart. Then the way in which He would do it: He would lead them through many afflictions; by which this was their encouragement to bear the cross till they reaped the fruit. In like manner the Lord says to the afflicted Jews: "I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord; thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you *an expected end.*" Such an end as you would wish, and having my promise, such as you may safely hope for—my thoughts, indeed, are not as your thoughts. You think I have cast you off, and that your present cross is to crush you. Now, I mean to do you good by it; and so the end will prove. Wait a little in faith, and all will come to a happy issue.

REV. W. ROMAINE.

THE evils of this life afflict men more or less according as the soul is fortified with considerations proper

to support us under them. When we consider that we have but a little while to be here, that we are upon our journey travelling towards our heavenly country, where we shall meet with all the delights we can desire, it ought not to trouble us much to endure storms and foul weather, and to want many of those accommodations we might expect at home. This is the common fate of travellers, and we must take things as we find them, and not look to have everything just to our mind. These difficulties and inconveniences will shortly be over, and after a few days will be quite forgotten, and be to us as if they had never been. And when we are safely landed in our own country, with what pleasure shall we look back upon those boisterous and rough seas which we have escaped? The more troubles we have passed through, the kinder usage we shall find when we come to our Father's house. So the Apostle tells us, that our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON.

DEATH, which at first sight looks like an extinction of both soul and body at once, we have reason to conclude to be no more than a change from one state of existence to another. But to remove all

doubts, and to confirm this conclusion, our holy religion has brought to clear and certain light a future and immortal life, where the righteous shall be advanced to a higher degree of dignity and happiness than can at present be either attained or conceived. This light, then, furnished by the Gospel, should enlarge our minds, elevate our affections above present things, and inspire us with the most ardent desire for that happy state which the Gospel has laid open to our hopes. Those who think to pass towards heaven, unacquainted with the changes, trials, and difficulties of this life, and without taking their fate in the world along with their fellow passengers, or without concerning themselves in their welfare, cannot be in a proper state for enjoying the happiness of heaven. If we consider the matter duly, we shall find that we have no good reason to be terrified or dispirited on account of the trials and hardships which accompany our situation upon earth; for even in these God has been pleased to manifest His goodness and regard to us. He thought it not proper to bestow heaven upon us at once, but has left us to choose it for ourselves, to choose it as the most inestimable of all blessings, indeed, as our only chief good; to choose it after having had experience of the emptiness of present enjoyments. We must not, therefore, renounce

this world, nor desert that station which God has assigned us in it. At the same time, we must always remember, that here we have no continuing city; and we must keep that better country to which we are bound continually in our eye, and as the object of our most earnest desire.

DRYSDALE.

THESE illustrations may serve to shew, at once, the goodness and the wisdom of God, in sending affliction, and adapting the methods of His discipline to the necessities of His people; and they cannot fail to recall to the minds of some, the recollection of many incidents in their past life, which were felt to be very painful, and seemed very dark and mysterious at the time of their occurrence, but to which they can now look back as the very brightest manifestation of the care and kindness of their Redeemer. If the believer has thus experienced, even on earth, the blessed effects of affliction, he will the more easily comprehend the import, and believe the truth of those statements in Scripture, which refer to its ultimate issue and effect in a future world of perfect holiness and peace. Here, the benefits of affliction, however valuable in themselves, are only partially enjoyed, by reason of the opposition which every holy in-

fluence meets with, from the remaining depravity of his heart, and other influences of a contrary nature to which he is exposed. The iron may be taken from a furnace heated seven times, and beaten with many strokes, but it contains within itself much dross, which prevents the pure ore from being fashioned as it ought. But there, all dross having been removed, and all unfriendly influences excluded, it shall be presented pure and spotless, and remain so for ever. It is in heaven alone that the full benefit of earthly afflictions shall be known and enjoyed. And what can reconcile us to the discipline of affliction, if this reflection will not, that it will terminate in a state of perfect holiness and peace; and that, meanwhile, it is preparing us for that blessed consummation?

It will terminate: the period is not far distant when all our sorrows and privations shall come to an end, when death shall bring us to that house where "the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest;" and when once the grave "has opened its peaceful bosom to receive us," the world, with all its changes and sorrows, can affect our comfort no more. The storm may rage above us, and the whirlwind sweep the solitary churchyard; the din of civil tumult may arise in the streets; the war-cry may be raised, and the shock

of battle succeed; the voice of famine may wail around us; yet no note disturbs the peaceful slumbers of the dead! But affliction will not terminate merely in the stillness of the tomb; it will be succeeded by the bliss of heaven, for which it is even now preparing us, and where finally and for ever, "the broken heart shall be bound up; the mourner comforted; beauty shall be appointed for ashes, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;" "and God Himself shall wipe away all tears from our eyes." D. BUCHANAN.

MAY our afflictions teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom; remembering that the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding. And may God Almighty comfort us now after the time that He hath plagued us; may He satisfy us with His mercy, and that soon; may He prosper the work of His hands upon us, giving us grace to profit by His visitation, and to pay Him our vows, which we promised with our lips, and spake with our mouths when we were in trouble; that so we may walk before Him here on earth, and hereafter, through the merits of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, we may come to His everlasting kingdom. Amen. *From the Visitatio Infirmorum.*

PART V.

ON THE LOSS OF FRIENDS.

No. 3.

Prayers Contributed and Extracted.

We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please Thee to defend, and provide for the fatherless children, and widows, and all that are desolate and oppressed.

In the midst of life we are in death: of whom may we seek for succour, but of Thee, O Lord, who for our sins art justly displeased.

Graciously look upon our afflictions.
Pitifully behold the sorrows of our hearts.
Lord, let Thy mercy be shewn upon us;
As we do put our trust in Thee.

PART V.

On the Loss of Friends.

No 3.

PRAYERS CONTRIBUTED AND EXTRACTED.

PRAYER AFTER THE LOSS OF FRIENDS.

O Lord, our heavenly Father, who gavest and hast taken away, but never leavest nor forsakest us, comfort our hearts, we beseech Thee, with the consolations of the Holy Spirit, and teach us not to sorrow as those who are without hope. Make us to realise the certainty of those great truths, that the fashion of this world passeth away, and that whatsoever is of this earth, earthy, is but vanity and vexation of spirit. Vouchsafe to wean our hearts from an undue love of things temporal, that, setting our affections on things above, our present sorrow may yield unto us the peaceable fruits of righteousness, and we may glorify Thee in

the day of our tribulation. Let the remembrance of Thy manifold mercies abide with us ever, and enable us to be sensible of Thy love alike when Thou withholdest, as when Thou givest. Make us to feel that we have not an High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but a Saviour and Friend, who, in the days of His flesh, has sympathised with sorrowing friends, and wept with human tears, and has given Himself for us, and became the first-fruits of them that slept—an earnest of the blessedness of them that die in the Lord. Lift Thou up, therefore, O Lord, for Thou alone canst, the hands which hang down, and pour balm into our wounded hearts, and in the snapping asunder of all earthly ties, vouchsafe to draw us nearer to Thyself, incline our hearts to a more unreserved devotion to Thy service, and revive in us a spirit of more earnest watchfulness against the hour of death and the day of judgment. Finally, give us faith to glorify Thee in Thy visitations, and so teach us by Thy chastisements, that our light affliction, which is but for a moment, may work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

SUMNER, BISHOP OF WINCHESTER.

COLLECT AFTER THE LOSS OF FRIENDS.

O Lord our God, who hast commanded us to call upon Thee in the day of trouble, give us grace that Thy chastisements may work in us patience, experience, and hope; and establish in our hearts the love of Thee above all things, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sumner, Bishop of Winchester.

PRAYER.

Righteous art Thou, O Lord, in Thy judgments, and in all Thy dealings with the children of men. None can stay Thy hand, or say unto Thee, What doest Thou. We humbly acknowledge Thy justice in the punishment of sin. Thou art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and wilt by no means clear the guilty. We confess that we have grievously offended against Thee, and have deserved Thy displeasure; but, O heavenly Father, be not angry with us for ever: in wrath remember mercy. For Thy dear Son's sake, pardon all our transgressions. Blot them out of the book of Thy remembrance. Deal not with us after our sins, neither reward us according to our iniquities. Lord, when Thou layest Thy chastening hand upon our families, and takest away any that are dear to us, enable us

meekly to bow to Thy holy will, and to believe that Thou doest all things well. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord! Sanctify to us, O Lord, all our remaining family comforts. We know not how soon they may be taken away from us, or we removed from them. Cause us to pass the time of our sojourning here in fear: and let Thy name be glorified by us, in all that we do, and in all that we suffer. Let us not yield to a spirit of complaining, or of unbelief. Shed abroad in our hearts the abundant consolations of Thy Spirit. Though Thou hast caused grief, yet have compassion upon us. Make us glad according to the days wherein Thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil. Return, O Lord of hosts; shew the light of Thy countenance, and we shall be whole. Hear us for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Mediator and Advocate. Amen.

PRAYER.

O Lord God Almighty, the refuge and strength of Thy people in all generations: Hitherto Thou hast been our preserver and guide: and Thou requirest us to be mindful of all Thy dealings with us, that we may learn to fear Thee, to love Thee, and to trust in Thee, for our good always. We would

remember, O Lord, and acknowledge Thy gracious hand in the afflictions by which Thou hast been pleased to chasten us: and we implore the grace of Thy Holy Spirit, to sanctify all our trials to us. If Thou visit us with want or with losses, bestow on us a spirit of humble reliance on Thy never-failing goodness. If disease and sickness be our lot, lead us to seek special consolation and support from the pardoning love of our Saviour. Should death enter our dwellings, reminding us that this is not our rest, O, may our affections be loosened from the world, and surely fixed on things above! Where our treasure is, there may our heart be also. Thou hast humbled us, and proved us, that we might know what was in our heart. But O, what depths of pride, of unbelief and ingratitude, have been discovered there! We entreat Thee, O Lord, to be gracious unto us. Take away our dross, and purify our souls. And when Thou hast prepared us by Thy grace, receive us at length into Thy blessed presence, not for our worthiness, but for the merit of our Saviour Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER.

O Lord, who hast given unto us Thy Holy Word to be a light to our feet and a a lantern unto our

path, grant to us also the gift of Thy Holy Spirit, which Thou hast promised to them that ask Thee. Comfort us with the tokens of Thy presence. Lift up upon us the light of Thy countenance. Protect us from every evil and from every danger. Let Thy voice be heard continually near us, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it; and suffer us not to turn aside, to the right hand or to the left. Thou hast declared, O Lord, that as many as Thou lovest, Thou dost rebuke and chasten. Cause us to receive Thy chastisements with all humility, and to learn by them what is Thy will concerning us. And, Lord, increase our faith; that looking up to Thee for wisdom to direct our paths, we may go forward with assurance and hope; and may so pass through our earthly pilgrimage, that finally we may attain Thy heavenly rest and glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER.

O Almighty God, who art the Guide and Comforter of all Thy people: lead us, we beseech Thee, by the counsels of Thy Word, and by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit, through all the trials of this changing life; and enable us to glorify Thee by patient continuance in well-doing. Of Thy bountiful Providence, give what Thou seest to be

good for us; and supply all our spiritual wants out of the riches of Thy grace in Christ Jesus. Grant us the comfort of Thy presence, and the light of Thy countenance, to support us in all our tribulations. Carry us safely through all temptations, let not sin have dominion over us. And, finally do Thou receive us into those eternal mansions which are prepared for all them that love and serve Thee through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen.

PRAYER.

We most humbly beseech Thee of Thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succour all them who in this transitory life are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity. And we also bless Thy holy name for all Thy servants departed this life in Thy faith and fear, beseeching Thee to give us grace so to follow their good examples, that with them we may be partakers of Thy heavenly kingdom. Grant this, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. Amen.

PRAYER.

O our Heavenly Father, who dost not willingly afflict the children of men, we thank Thee for

Thy gracious declaration, that all things work together for good to them that love Thee. Unite us to the blessed company of Thy redeemed children, through faith in Jesus Christ; and being justified and accepted in Him, may we enjoy the consolations of Thy Spirit, and the comfort of Thy love. When Thou chastenest, teach us to receive Thy correction meekly, and to profit by it. Suffer us not to faint in the day of adversity; but may we rather rejoice in the hope of passing out of much tribulation into the kingdom of God. O grant us patience, to endure these afflictions, which are but for a moment; and give to us an increase of faith, that we may feel the reality of things unseen and eternal. Thus, O our God and Saviour, keep us faithful unto death, that we may at length receive the crown of life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER.

Blessed Lord, who in Thy Son, Jesus Christ, hast opened to us the gate of everlasting life, we pray Thee to establish our hearts by faith in Him, and grant us a peaceful assurance that Jesus is ours, and we are His for ever. We confess, that, through the infirmity of our sinful nature, we cannot always rejoice in Thee, or praise Thee as we

ought. Oftentimes our souls are bowed down by sorrow, affliction, or temptation: and our thoughts wander to and fro, forgetting their resting-place. Merciful God, cheer us in our disconsolate and desponding hours; and never suffer us to repine or murmur against Thee. Quiet our alarms, scatter our fears, supply our wants, and keep us in perfect peace, while casting all our care upon Thee, who carest for us. Lord, have compassion on all who are in any trouble, whether of mind, body, or estate. Give them patience while they suffer. In Thine own time and method deliver them; and cause them to praise Thy goodness. Hear us, O Lord, and make us joyful in Thy salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O Lord, our Saviour! Thou seest that to us every chastening is, for the present, grievous. Thou knowest our frame; Thou rememberest that we are but dust. Suffer us not to faint in the day of adversity. Stand by us and help us. Give us the consolations of Thy Spirit, and the comfort of Thy love. Be present with us in this our affliction. Bestow upon us abundantly the spirit of grace and of supplication, that in all our troubles we may make our requests known unto Thee: and may the

peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep our hearts and minds calmly rejoicing, and safely established in Thee, our Lord and our Redeemer. Amen.

O Thou Father of mercies and God of all consolation, we are not worthy of the least of all the mercy and of all the truth which Thou hast shewn unto Thy servants. But alas! how soon do we forget thy favours whenever new afflictions come upon us. Lord, it is our infirmity, and our sin, that we are so ready to sink into unbelief, ever doubting Thy love. Pardon this ungrateful spirit, and cast it out by the gracious influence of Thy Holy Spirit. Shew to us the things which are freely given unto us in Christ. Thou hast sealed to us the covenant of pardon and peace through His blood: bestow on us, also, for His sake, the spirit of adoption, whereby we may cry, Abba, Father! Shed abroad in our hearts Thy love; fill us with all joy and peace in believing; and make us to abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost. Whenever any new tribulation shall come upon us, teach us to cast all our burden upon Thee. Look upon our affliction and our pain, and forgive us all our sins. Uphold us with Thy free spirit. Let patience have her perfect work; and

do Thou perfect that which concerneth us. Father, not our will, but Thine be done. And raise us, at length, to Thy glorious seat above, where the redeemed of the Lord shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. We ask these mercies in the prevailing name of Thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER.

O Lord, who hast assured us of Thy Fatherly pity towards all who love Thy name, we beseech Thee lead us near to Thee, that in all our temptations and sorrows we may receive grace sufficient for us. Let the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, abide with us continually. We are weak and sinful creatures: but we intreat Thee to pardon our sins, and to have compassion upon our infirmities. Sanctify all Thy corrections to the good of our souls; and comfort us with the hope, that it shall be well with Thy servants at the last; when grace shall have perfected the work begun in our hearts, and made us meet for the heavenly inheritance above, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER IN TIME OF AFFLICTION.

O our God, the Father of our spirits, who never chastenest us but for our profit, help us to believe

that whom Thou lovest Thou chastenest, and scourgest all the sons whom thou dost receive. May we lift up, then, the hands which hang down and the feeble knees, and by full confidence in Thy wisdom and goodness, and having entire love to Thee, may we return unto the Lord, for He hath torn and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up. He will revive us and raise us up, and we shall live in His sight. Oh! that the holy directions and gracious promises of Thy Word may be written in our hearts; and do Thou make us so strong in faith, that they may have a sustaining, abiding, and comforting power in the midst of every trial and affliction here below. Hear us for our Redeemer's sake. Amen.

E. Bickersteth.

PRAYER.

We thank Thee, O Lord, that Thou hast, by Thy good providence, caused us to be born in a Christian land, where we are surrounded by so many means of grace, and so many sources of consolation in our times of trial and bereavement. Yet, suffer us not to deceive ourselves with the name of Christian if we have not the power of Christ dwelling within us. O graft us into the true vine as living branches of the same. Unite us to Jesus by a true and living

faith, that we may bring forth fruit unto holiness. Pardon our past unprofitableness; and cause us to abound in every good word and work. Sanctify to us all our trials and afflictions. Draw our souls from earthly things, and fill us with pure and heavenly affections. Effectually incline us, by Thy Spirit, to choose Thee as our present and our eternal portion; and enable us to continue in Thy love, even unto the end, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER.

What thanks we owe to Thee for the happy departure in the Lord of our beloved friend, and that we have so joyful a hope, that death was great gain, and that he is now with Christ, which is far better. O Lord, may so blessed an end quicken us to full confidence in Jesus, and an entire devotedness to His service. E. Bickersteth.

PRAYER IN AFFLICTION.

O God, who commandest when we are in trouble to open our hearts and to tell out our sorrows to Thee in prayer, and dost promise to listen with compassion to our supplications, give me grace to approach Thee, that I offend not in thought or word.

Put away from me every impatient imagination, prevent every unworthy petition; let not my prayers assume the language of complaint, nor my sorrows the character of despair. Upon the multitude of Thy mercies, O God, I repose my grief, as I rest my hope; and whether it shall seem fit to remove the calamity with which I am afflicted, or still to suspend it over me, dispose me, under every dispensation of Thy will, patiently to adore Thy inscrutable providence, and to bless Thy holy name for ever and ever. I offer this and every prayer in the name of Jesus Christ my Saviour. Amen.

PRAYER.

O Lord, support us in this hour of sorrowful remembrance; for to whom can we come, in hours like this, but unto Thee. Thou only hast the words of eternal life; Thou only canst comfort us; and, blessed be Thy name, that Thou art our Father in heaven; and that when all earthly comforts fail us, we can still place all our hopes for time and for eternity in Thy wise and gracious hand. O teach us, who still remain together, so to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Alas! O Lord, we have been too forgetful of the short-lived tenure by which all our blessings

are held; we have said in our hearts, that we should never be moved, and have spent our days in folly, as if Thou wouldst never call us into judgment. It is, therefore, O Lord, that Thou hast stretched out Thy hand to afflict us, and that Thou hast filled this house with mourning. Enable us to receive the lessons which this severe chastisement was intended to teach us; and when we see those whom we loved taken away, may we lay to heart our latter end, and be enabled, by Thy grace, to free our minds from all those vanities which hide from us the uncertainty, both of our own life, and of all the good things that are allotted to us in this world. Forgive, O Lord, any immoderate grief which we may have indulged on this occasion. In all events may we see the operation of Thy providence, and meekly and submissively resign ourselves to Thy will; for Thou, O Lord, dost not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men; and though clouds and darkness often surround Thy throne, we know that justice and judgment are Thy dwelling-place. O comfort us with the consolations of Thy good Spirit; may our conduct through life be humble and resigned; let not our affections be too much attached to anything in this world, but may we use all Thy gifts as not abusing them: and when Thou takest them away, may we

submit ourselves without repining to Thy righteous dispensations. Into Thy gracious keeping, O heavenly Father, we now entrust all our concerns for time and for eternity; guide us by Thy counsel while we live, and grant us all a happy meeting in Thy heavenly kingdom, for the sake of Jesus Christ Thy Son and our Redeemer, to whom with Thee and the Holy Ghost be glory, now and for evermore. Amen.

PRAYER.

Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief. Help me, as I know that by my sinfulness I have justly merited all my sufferings, so may I also clearly discern Thine infinite wisdom and boundless love; Thou dost not give me up to my sins, but by fatherly chastisements wouldest correct me, and make me meet for Thy heavenly family. Let me see that in very faithfulness Thou hast afflicted me, and wholly submit myself to Thy hands, through Jesus Christ my Redeemer. Amen.

Bickersteth.

PRAYER IN BEHALF OF THE WIDOW AND THE FATHERLESS.

O Thou, Lord God, who declarest Thyself the Father of the fatherless, and Judge of the widow;

look down from the habitation of Thy holiness, and have compassion on those who are desolate and afflicted, especially on all widows and orphans. Thou knowest their sorrows and their necessities now that they are bereaved of their earthly support, and we commend them unto Thee, as their succour, their defence, and their hope. Be Thou their salvation, also, in the time of trouble. Guide their steps; support them under every trial, temptation, and tribulation; teach them constantly to spread all their sorrows, wants, and fears, before Thee in prayer. Dispose them to come boldly unto the throne of grace, that they may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. O Lord, we know that here we have no abiding city: in the midst of life we are in death. Enable us to do Thy will, and patiently to suffer Thy chastisements; pardon our sins, lift up the light of Thy countenance upon us; and let Thy Holy Spirit in all things direct and rule our hearts, that, finally, we may attain the land of everlasting rest, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

PRAYER FOR A WIDOWED PARENT.

John xvii. 11.—Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom Thou hast given me.

O Lord, our heavenly Father, how wonderful are

Thy dispensations towards the children of men! Thou givest us all the blessings by which life is gladdened, and thou also, for purposes of mercy and wisdom which are unknown to us, takest away the comforts which we once enjoyed. Behold me, O Lord, whom Thy hand has afflicted, and for Thy great mercy's sake, bind up the wounds Thou hast seen fit to make. Forbid, O Lord, that I should ever murmur at Thy dispensations; but rather, by a constant review of all the mercy which thou hast manifested towards me, may I learn to value nothing more highly than it ought to be valued, but ever to believe that Thou who givest canst also take away; and that when Thou takest away, Thou canst also make Thy most severe dispensations a source of good to those who seek to do Thy will. Grant, O heavenly Father, that while I cherish, as becomes me, the memory of the good who are departed, my heart may submit itself, even in this hour of bitter sorrow, with perfect resignation to Thy holy chastisements. And help me to estimate as I ought the great duty which is still left me to perform. Thou hast entrusted to my care the rearing of minds which are destined to live for ever; Thou hast bound me to their interests by all holy and sacred ties. Oh! grant that I may see my duty in its proper light, and that I may prepare myself for

fulfilling it with a becoming dependence on Thy blessing. O Lord! I am not able in myself for so great a charge; but, blessed be Thy name, that Thou hast promised to assist and to prosper the labours of those who are earnestly intent on doing good. To Thy merciful aid, therefore, I look for direction. Be Thou the strength of my heart, and my continued support in this great task. Grant, O Lord, that it may be my especial study to train up my children in Thy fear, and to imbue them early with sentiments of duty to Thee, who hast been the God of their fathers in all generations. And when I am taken away, be Thou still the God and guide of those who have been dear to me in life. For to whom else, O Lord, but to Thy Fatherly protection can I commit them? O never leave them nor forsake them. In this blessed hope, I now resign myself to whatever Thou mayest see fit to ordain for me, and for those whom Thou hast entrusted to me. And grant, O merciful Father, that we, who have been so tenderly and closely united in this life, may all meet at last in Thy heavenly kingdom, and to Thy blessed name, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be ascribed all glory and honour, now and for evermore. Amen.

PRAYER FOR AN ORPHAN.

HOSEA xiv. 3.—In Thee the fatherless findeth mercy.

HEAVENLY Father, I bless and praise Thy holy name, that Thou hast been pleased to call Thyself the Father of the fatherless, and the helper of those who have none to guide them. O, Lord, I am sore afflicted; for Thou hast removed from me the guides of my youth, and Thou hast taken away them that sought for my good. I am cast upon the world as one who is forsaken; and it is in Thee alone that my help can be found. But blessed be Thy name, that in Thy good providence I may put my trust: for nothing happens without Thy permission. It is, O Lord, my consolation to know that Thou hast often blessed with peculiar blessings those who seemed to have none other stay; Thou hast led them all their life long as a shepherd; Thou conductest them by still waters, and makest them to lie down in green pastures; and goodness and mercy have followed them all their days. How precious, O Lord, are Thy thoughts towards us. How great is Thy mercy! O grant me perfect trust in Thy providential guidance; and even when all things seem to go against me, let me never cease to look up to Thee as my Father who is in heaven. Grant me, O Lord, a sincere desire to do Thy will. May

Thy blessed word be as a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. May its promises and consolations be my delight. Incline my heart to revere and love all Thine ordinances; and may I never forget, by daily prayer, to commit my ways and thoughts to Thy gracious guidance. If it be consistent with Thy wisdom, O Lord, prosper my worldly concerns. Raise up friends to supply the place of those who have been taken from me. Enable me to conduct my affairs with prudence, and keep me always humble, and temperate, and in dutiful reliance on Thy protection and blessing. And grant, O Lord, that whatever may be my portion in this world, I may at last obtain an inheritance in heaven. May I die in the Lord, in firm belief of the doctrine and promises of Thy blessed word, and finally meet those who have been separated from me in time, in that happy land where there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor sin; but where the pure in heart shall for ever see and love God. In this blessed hope I now, O Father, resign myself to Thy precious care. Go with me through all the scenes of this mortal life, and take me at last to Thy kingdom in glory, for Christ's sake, to whom, with Thee, and the blessed Spirit, be ascribed all glory and praise, world without end. Amen.

CONSOLATIONS AND PETITIONS.

THE Lord is nigh unto all such as call upon Him; yea, all such as call upon Him faithfully. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear Him; He will hear their cry, and will help them. Put not your trust in any child of man, for there is no help in them; but the Lord healeth those that are broken in heart, and giveth medicine to heal their sickness. O Lord, Thou hast searched me out and known me, Thou knowest my down sitting and mine uprising; Thou art about my path and about my bed, and spiest out all my ways. With tender mercy Thou regardest us: Thou invitest us to pour out our hearts before Thee at all times, to call upon Thee in the time of trouble, to look upon Thee and be saved. My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. My heart is disquieted within me, and the fear of death is upon me. When my heart is in heaviness, I will think upon God; I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help. Go not far from me, O God; haste Thee to help me, hide not Thy face from me, for I am in trouble; O haste Thee, and help me. Thy rebuke has broken my heart, I am full of heaviness. O my God, my soul is troubled; Thou only art my

refuge; on Thee may I rest! Are not all events in the hand of the Almighty? O why then do I doubt? not my will, therefore, O my God, but Thine be done. Do unto me what seemeth good in Thy wisdom, still will I bless Thee, and praise Thee; it is the Lord, and shall I murmur at His appointments? Shall the creature say to his Creator, what doest Thou? O let the unfeigned language of my soul be, when I address the Father of my spirit, the apportioner of my lot, the sustainer of my weakness, "When Thou wilt, where Thou wilt, and how Thou wilt." Is it not said, Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart? Grant, O my God, that I may be refined as silver, and made pure like gold. Let me rejoice in hope, let me be patient in tribulation, let me continue instant in prayer; and may the God of all grace, who has called me unto His eternal glory by Jesus Christ, after that I have suffered awhile, make me perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle me! Now unto God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the inspirer of knowledge, and the giver of all grace, be glory and praise, now and for ever. Amen.

THE WIDOW'S PRAYER.

O ETERNAL God, my most merciful Father, Thou art my refuge and my hope, my Guardian and Pro-

tector all my days. Oh! give me patience under Thy afflicting hand, and a quiet, resigned, and humble spirit. Preserve me, Thy servant, from all evil; lead me into all good; change my sorrows into comforts, my infirmity into spiritual strength. I am Thine, O save me; sanctify me and preserve me for ever, that neither life nor death, health, nor sickness, prosperity nor adversity, weakness within, nor cross accidents without, may ever separate me from the love of God, which is in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. JEREMY TAYLOR.

AN ACT OF RESIGNATION.

O LORD, heavenly Father, I bow my will to Thee, whose judgments are unsearchable, and whose ways are past finding out. I will bless the Lord at all times. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord. I have received innumerable good things from Thy hands, O Father of mercies, why should I not receive evil also? The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? I humbly take it from Thy hands, O my God, and submit to Thy all-wise dispensations. I return Thee again that which Thou didst so lovingly bestow upon me, with my most hearty thanks for lending me the enjoyment of it so long. Oh! grant me to rest upon Thy love in

Christ Jesus, by whom Thou hast provided a remedy for all our griefs, and comforted us with the hope of another and better life, where there is no death, nor any pain or sorrow, but all tears shall be wiped away from our eyes. To Thee, who knowest our frame, and canst have compassion on our infirmities; to Thee, O Lord, who art my best and eternal Friend, be all glory and praise, now and for ever. Amen.

A SHORT INTERCESSION FOR TIMES OF TROUBLE.

O Lord, heavenly Father, have compassion on all who are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity, and succour them according to their various wants. Shed the graces of Thy Holy Spirit upon them, their relations, and friends; more especially upon the fatherless and widows. Enable them to be "faithful unto death," and then bestow upon them that crown of life which is promised to all true believers by our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be all praise, now and for ever. Amen.

PRAYER.

O Lord, our heavenly Father, cause us to feel our guilt and helplessness: and whenever any sorrow is

sent to us, let it bring our sins to our remembrance, that we may turn our weary souls to Christ, and seek pardon, and peace, and rest in Him. O help us now to take upon us the yoke of Jesus, which is easy; and His burden, which is light! Teach us to walk humbly with Thee: and to raise our affections from the things of time to the higher hopes of eternity. Let Thy peace, O God! rule in our hearts; and may our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. We ask these things in the name of Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER.

O Lord, who hast treasured up in Thy Son, Jesus Christ, grace sufficient for Thy people, to succour them in every time of need; help us, we pray Thee, in all our trials and adversities to draw near to Thee, through Him. Thou carest for us: O enable us to cast our burden upon Thee! We mourn before Thee the weakness of our faith: do Thou graciously increase our faith. Let Thy Holy Spirit strengthen us with strength in our souls that we may never fail nor be discouraged. Hear us, O Thou that never sleepest nor slumberest, and so

guide us through the waves of this troublesome world, that we may at length reach the haven of eternal rest; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR A PARENT ON THE LOSS OF A CHILD.

Almighty God, the eternal Father of mankind, who didst give to Thy servant David grace calmly to bear the loss of his child, in the prospect of a joyful reunion, and thus to leave us an example of pious resignation; give me, Thy servant, also, strength to bear my affliction with the same holy feelings, and meekly to submit to Thy heavenly will. Oh! may I find comfort in the reflection that my beloved child is early snatched from a world of sin and sorrow; and by this trial may I be taught so to live here below, that when my soul shall be summoned before Thee, I may, with all that are dear to me here on earth, dwell for evermore in Thy blessed presence above, through the merits of Jesus Christ my Saviour. Amen.

PRAYER.

Stir up, we beseech Thee, O Lord, the hearts and wills of Thy faithful people, that while many are

sleeping around us the sleep of death, we may have grace to devote ourselves, our souls and bodies, to Thy holy and happy service; that we may follow the Lord fully, without hesitation, and without reserve: thinking nothing too dear to sacrifice at Thy bidding, and nothing too hard to undertake at Thy command; that when Thou comest, we may be among the blessed number of those who are waiting, and watching, with their loins girt, and their lamps burning, to go in with Thee for ever: and be partakers of the marriage supper of the Lamb. Amen.

To the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the one only living and true God, be ascribed all praise and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

PART V.

ON THE LOSS OF FRIENDS.

No. 4.

Selection of Sacred Poetry.

When bowed beneath afflictions, sent
Thy frequent wanderings to reprobe,
Hail them as heaben's kind mercies, meant
For thy soul's good, for God is lobe.
Thy Saviour trust, for thee He died
By works of lobe, thy faith approbe;
So shall thy soul in peace abide,
And know and feel that God is lobe.

LORD TEIGNMOUTH.

PART V.

On the Loss of Friends.

No 4.

SELECTION OF SACRED POETRY.

THE SHELTERING VINE.

Receive me, Lord, and let me find
  Thy love my refuge and my stay;
For trouble's desolating wind
  Has torn my sheltering vine away.

* * * * *

I did not think that skies so clear
  As these portended aught of harm;
I listened, but I did not hear
  The smallest sound to cause alarm.

I knew that Thou alone couldst make
  Our happy earthly home secure,
And thought I loved it for the sake
  Of Him whose blessing made it sure.

But though I traced Thy hand in all
That made my home so dear to me,
I did not live to Thee at all,
Nor make my happiness in Thee.

Thy love discerned it at a glance,
And swept away my sheltering vine;
It was not time, it was not chance,
It was Thy hand, and only Thine.

* * * * *

Thou hast done wisely. Yes, I know
Earth never should have been my rest;
And I will follow Thee, and go
Where'er Thou bidd'st—Thy way is best.

Thou hast done wisely. Never more
Let me find rest in aught but Thee;
Or nestle, as I did before,
In dangerous security.

Wherever Thou shalt guide or lead,
'Tis there my soul would gladly be:
She leans not on a broken reed,
Who stays her feebleness on Thee.

Thou art my strength, my sheltering vine,
No storms can desolate me now;
For like a tendril, I will twine
My weakness round the parent bough.

From "The Dove on the Cross."

Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north wind's breath,
And stars to set,—but all,
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, O Death!

Day is for mortal care;
Eve for glad tidings round the joyous hearth;
Night for the dreams of sleep, the voice of prayer;
But all for Thee, thou mightiest of the earth.

Youth and the opening rose
May look like things too glorious for decay,
And smile at Thee! but Thou art not for those
That wait the ripened bloom to seize their prey.

Leaves have their time to fall.
And flowers to wither at the north-wind's breath,
And stars to set,—but all,
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, O Death!

We know when moons shall wane;
When summer birds from far shall cross the sea;
When autumn's hue shall tinge the golden grain;
But who shall teach us where to look for Thee?

Is it when spring's first gale
Comes forth to whisper where the violets lie?
Is it when roses in our path grow pale?
They have one season,—all are ours to die!

Thou art where billows foam;
Thou art where music melts upon the air;
Thou art around us in our peaceful home;
And the world calls us forth,—and thou art there.

Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north-wind's breath,
And stars to set,—but all,
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, O Death!

MRS. HEMANS.

A CLOUD lay cradled near the setting sun,
A gleam of crimson ting'd its braided snow,
Long had I watch'd the glory moving on
O'er the still radiance of the lake below;

Tranquil its spirit seem'd, and floated slow,
E'en in its very motion there was rest;
While every breath of eve that chanced to blow,
Wafted the traveller to the beauteous west,
Emblem methought, of the departed soul,
To whose white robe a gleam of bliss is given,
And by the breath of mercy made to roll
Right onward to the golden gates of heaven,
Where to the eye of faith it peaceful lies,
And tells to man his glorious destinies.

DEATH OF A CHRISTIAN.

Calm on the bosom of thy God,
Fair spirit! rest thee now!
Even while with ours thy footsteps trod,
His seal was on thy brow.

Dust, to its narrow house beneath!
Soul, to its place on high!
They that have seen thy look in death,
No more may fear to die.

Mrs. Hemans.

HOLY TEARS.

Yes, thou mayest weep, for Jesus shed
Such tears as those thou sheddest now,
When, for the living or the dead,
Sorrow lay heavy on His brow.

He sees thee weep, yet doth not blame
The weakness of thy flesh and heart;
Thy human nature is the same
As that in which He took a part.

He knows its weakness, for he felt
The crushing power of pain and woe,
How body, soul, and spirit melt
And faint beneath the stunning blow.

What if poor sinners count thy grief
The sign of an unchastened will?
He who can give thy soul relief,
Knows that thou art submissive still.

Turn thee to Him, to Him alone,
For all that our poor lips can say
To soothe thee, broken-hearted one,
Would fail to comfort thee to-day.

We will not speak to thee, but sit
In prayerful silence by thy side;
Grief has its ebbs and flows; 'tis fit
Our love should wait the ebbing tide.

Jesus himself will comfort thee,
In His own time, in His own way;
And haply more than "two or three"
Unite in prayer for thee to-day.

From "The Dove on the Cross."

"My times are in Thy hand."

FATHER, I know that all my life
Is portioned out for me,
And the changes that will surely come,
I do not fear to see;
But I ask Thee for a lowly mind,
Intent on pleasing Thee.

I ask Thee for a thoughtful love,
Through constant watching, wise
To meet the glad with joyful smiles,
And to wipe the tearful eyes;
And a heart at leisure from itself,
To soothe and sympathize.

I would not have the restless will
That hurries to and fro,
Seeking for some great thing to do,
Or secret thing to know;
I would be treated as a child,
And guided where I go.

Wherever in the world I am,
In whatsoe'er estate,
I have a fellowship with hearts
To keep and cultivate;
And a work of lowly love to do
For the Lord on whom I wait.

So I ask Thee for the daily strength
To none that ask denied,
And a mind to blend with outward life,
While keeping at Thy side;
Content to fill a little space,
If *Thou* be glorified.

And if some things I do not ask
In my cup of blessings be,
I would have my spirit filled the more
With grateful love to Thee;
And careful less to serve Thee *much*,
Than to please Thee *perfectly*.

There are briars besetting every path,
Which call for patient care;
There is a cross in every lot,
And a need for earnest prayer;
But a lowly heart that leans on Thee
Is happy anywhere.

In a service which Thy love appoints
There are no bonds for me;
For my secret heart is taught "the truth"
That makes thy children "free."
And a life of self-renouncing love
Is a life of liberty! A. L. W.

Is't not God's deed whatever thing is done
In heaven and earth? Did not He all create
To die again? All ends that were begun:
Their times in His eternal book of fate
Are written sure, and have their certain date.
Who then can strive with strong necessity
That holds the world in his still changing state?
Or shun the death ordained by destiny
When hour of death is come? let none ask whence or why. SPENSER.

Gone? Are ye all then gone,
The good, the beautiful, the kind, the dear?
Passed to your glorious rest so swiftly on,
And left me weeping here?

I gaze on your bright track;
I hear your lessening voices as ye go.
Have you no sign, no solace to fling back
To us who toil below?

They hear not my faint cry;
Beyond the range of sense for ever flown,
I see them melt into eternity,
And feel I am alone.

Into the haven pass'd.
They anchor far beyond the scale of ill;
While the stern billow and the reckless blast
Are mine to cope with still.

Oh! from that land of love,
Look ye not sometimes on this world of woe?
Think you not, dear ones, in bright bowers above,
Of those you've left below?

Surely ye note us here,
Though not as we appear to mortal view;
And can we still, with all our stains, be dear
To spirits pure as you?

* * * * *

Is it a fair fond thought,
That you may still our friends and guardians be,
And Heaven's high ministry by you be wrought
With abjects low as we?

May we not sweetly hope
That you around our path and bed may dwell?
And shall not all our blessings brighter drop
From hands we loved so well?

Shall we not feel you near
In hours of danger, solitude, and pain,
Cheering the darkness, drying off the tear,
And turning loss to gain?

Shall not your gentle voice
Break on temptation's dark and sullen mood,
Subdue our erring will, o'errule our choice,
And win from ill to good?

O yes! to us, to us,
A portion of your converse still be given:
Struggling affection still would hold you thus,
Nor yield you all to heaven!

Lead our faint steps to God;
Be with us while the desert here we roam;
Teach us to tread the path which you have trod,
To find with you our home!

H. F. Lyte.

Brother, thou art gone before us,
And thy sainted soul is flown
Where tears are wip'd from every eye,
And sorrow is unknown;
From the burthen of the flesh,
And from care and sin releas'd;
Where the wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary are at rest.

The toilsome way thou'st travelled o'er,
And borne the heavy load,
But Christ has taught thy languid feet
To reach His blest abode.

Thou'rt sleeping now like Lazarus
Upon thy Father's breast,
Where the wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary are at rest.

Sin can never taint thee now,
Nor doubt thy faith assail,
Nor thy meek trust in Jesus Christ
And the Holy Spirit fail;
And there thou'rt sure to meet the good,
Whom on earth thou lovedst best,
Where the wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary are at rest.

"Earth to earth," and "dust to dust,"
The solemn priest hath said;
So we lay the turf above thee now,
And seal thy narrow bed.
But thy spirit, brother, soars away
Among the faithful blest,
Where the wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary are at rest.

And when the Lord shall summon us,
Whom thou hast left behind,
May we, untainted by the world,
As sure a welcome find.

May each like thee depart in peace,
To be a glorious guest,
Where the wicked cease from troubling,
Where the weary are at rest.

MILLMAN.

"Thou compassest me on every side."
O GOD, unseen but not unknown,
Thine eye is ever fixed on me:
I dwell beneath Thy sacred throne,
Encompassed by Thy Deity.

Throughout this universe of space
To nothing am I long allied,
For flight of time, and change of place,
My strongest, dearest bonds divide.

Parents I had, but where are they?
Friends whom I knew, I know no more;
Companions once that cheered my way,
Have dropt behind, or gone before.

Now I am one amidst the crowd
Of life and action hurrying round;
Now left alone; for like a cloud
They came, they went, and are not found.

Of all that I have done or said
How little can I now recall!
Forgotten things to me are dead;
With Thee they live, Thou know'st them all.

The moment comes, when strength must fail,
When health, and hope, and comfort flown,
I must go down into the vale
And shade of death, with Thee alone.

Alone with Thee;—in that dread strife,
Uphold me through mine agony,
And gently be this dying life
Exchanged for immortality.

Then, when th' unbodied spirit lands
Where flesh and blood have never trod,
And in th' unveiled presence stands
Of Thee, my Saviour, and my God;

Be mine eternal portion this,
Since Thou wert always here with me,
That I may view Thy face in bliss,
And be for evermore with Thee.

MONTGOMERY.

CASA WAPPY.

And hast thou sought thy heavenly home,
  Our fond, dear boy;
The realms where sorrow dare not come,
  Where life is joy?
Pure at thy death as at thy birth,
Thy spirit caught no taint from earth,
Ev'n by its bliss we mete our dearth,
  Casa Wappy!

Despair was in our last farewell,
  As closed thine eye;
Tears of our anguish may not tell
  When thou didst die;
Words may not paint our grief for thee,
Sighs are but bubbles on the sea,
Of our unfathom'd agony,
  Casa Wappy!

Thou wert a vision of delight
  To bless us given;
Beauty embodied to our sight,
  A type of heaven:
So dear to us thou wert, thou art
Ev'n less thine own self, than a part
Of mine, and of thy mother's heart,
  Casa Wappy!

Thy bright brief day knew no decline,
'Twas cloudless joy;
Sunrise and night alone were thine,
Beloved boy!
This morn beheld thee blithe and gay;
That found thee prostrate in decay;
And ere a third shone, clay was clay,
Casa Wappy!

Gem of our hearth, our household pride,
Earth's undefiled;
Could love have saved, thou hadst not died,
Our dear, sweet child!
Humbly we bow to fate's decree,
Yet had we hoped that time should see
Thee mourn for us, not us for thee,
Casa Wappy!

Do what I may, go where I will,
Thou meet'st my sight;
There dost thou glide before me still—
A form of light.
I feel thy breath upon my cheek,
I see thee smile, I hear thee speak,
Till oh! my heart is like to break,
Casa Wappy!

Methinks thou smil'st before me now,
With glance of stealth;
The hair thrown back from thy full brow
In buoyant health:
I see thine eyes' deep violet light,
Thy dimpled cheek carnation'd bright,
Thy clasping arms so round and white,
Casa Wappy!

The nursery shews thy pictured wall,
Thy bat, thy bow,
Thy cloak and bonnet, club and ball:
But where art thou?
A corner holds thine empty chair,
Thy playthings idly scatter'd there,
But speak to us of our despair,
Casa Wappy!

Ev'n to the last, thy every word,
To glad, to grieve,
Was sweet, as sweetest song of bird
On summer's eve;
In outward beauty undecay'd,
Death o'er thy spirit cast no shade,
And, like the rainbow, thou didst fade,
Casa Wappy!

We mourn for thee, when blind blank night
The chamber fills;
We pine for thee, when morn's first light
Reddens the hills:
The sun, the moon, the stars, the sea,
All, to the wall-flower and wild-pea,
Are changed; we saw the world thro' thee,
Casa Wappy!

And though, perchance, a smile may gleam
Of casual mirth,
It doth not own, whate'er may seem,
An inward birth.
We miss thy small step on the stair;
We miss thee at thine evening prayer;
All day we miss thee, everywhere,
Casa Wappy!

Snows muffled earth when thou didst go,
In life's spring-bloom,
Down to the appointed house below—
The silent tomb.
But now the green leaves on the tree,
The cuckoo, and "the busy bee,"
Return—but with them bring not thee,
Casa Wappy!

'Tis so ; but can it be—(while flowers
Revive again)—
Man's doom, in death that we and ours
For aye remain ?
Oh ! can it be, that, o'er the grave,
The grass renew'd should yearly wave,
Yet God forget our child to save ?—
Casa Wappy !

It cannot be ; for were it so
Thus man could die,
Life were a mockery—thought were woe—
And truth a lie ;
Heaven were a coinage of the brain—
Religion frenzy—Virtue vain—
And all our hopes to meet again,
Casa Wappy !

Yes, 'tis sweet balm to our despair,
Fond, fairest boy,
That heaven is God's, and thou art there,
With Him in joy ;
There past are death and all its woes ;
There beauty's stream for ever flows ;
And pleasure's day no sunset knows,
Casa Wappy !

Farewell, then, for a while, farewell.
Pride of my heart;
It cannot be that long we dwell
Thus torn apart:
Time's shadows like the shuttle flee,
And dark howe'er life's night may be,
Beyond the grave I'll meet with thee,
Casa Wappy!

MOIR.

JEREMIAH x. 24.

LORD, as a tender mother day by day
Weans the weak babe she loves, lest it should pine,
So wean us Lord, so make us wholly thine,
Lest in our feebleness we start away
From Thy loved chastening: for we could not bear
The sudden vision of ourselves and Thee,
Or learn at once how vain our bright hopes be.
Then be our earthly weakness, Lord, Thy care,
And e'en in wounding heal, in breaking spare.

S. WILBERFORCE.

THE spirit's land! Where is that land
Of which our fathers tell!
On whose mysterious, viewless strand
Earth's parted millions dwell!

There fadeless flowers their blossoms wear
Beneath a cloudless sky;
And there the latest lingering tear
Is wiped from every eye;

And souls beneath the tree of life
Repose upon that bless'd shore,
Where pain, and toil, and storm, and strife,
Shall never reach them more.

MALCOLM.

OH! 'tis one scene of parting here,
Love's watchword is—farewell!
And almost starts the following tear
Ere dried the last that fell!
Count o'er the hours whose happy flight
Is shared with those we love;
Like stars amid a stormy night,
Alas! how few they prove!
Then happiest he, whose gifted eye
Above this world can see,
And those dividing realms descry,
Where partings cannot be:

Who with one changeless friend on high
Life's varied path has trod,
And soars to meet beyond the sky
The ransomed and their God.

TOWNSEND.

I COME to Thee, Almighty God,
For grace to bow beneath Thy rod,
To acquiesce in all Thy will,
And learn the important word, "Be still!"
Thou see'st my feeble frame opprest,
In vain my spirit sighs for rest;
But, Lord, perform Thy holy will,
And teach Thy servant to be still.
Thou know'st how wayward is my mind,
While all Thy ways are just and kind:
O make me love Thy holy will,
And bid Thy servant to be still.

LOWELL.

PSALM XLIV. 12.—Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest.

O SAVIOUR! whose mercy, severe in its kindness,
Has chastened my wand'rings, and guided my way,
Ador'd be the pow'r which illumin'd my blindness,
And weaned me from phantoms that smil'd to betray.

Enchanted with all that was dazzling and fair,
I followed the rainbow,—I caught at the toy;—
And still in displeasure, Thy goodness was there,
Disappointing the hope, and defeating the joy.

The blossom blush'd bright, but a worm was below;—
The moonlight shone fair, there was blight in the beam;—
Sweet whispered the breeze, but it whispered of woe;—
And bitterness flow'd in the soft-flowing stream.

So cured of my folly, yet cured but in part,
I turn'd to the refuge Thy pity display'd;
And still did this eager and credulous heart
Weave visions of promise that bloom'd but to fade.

I thought that the course of the pilgrim to heaven
Would be bright as the summer, and glad as the morn;
Thou show'dst me the path — It was dark and uneven,
All rugged with rock, and all tangled with thorn.

I dreamed of celestial rewards and renown,—
I grasped at the triumph which blesses the brave,
I ask'd for the palm-branch, the robe, and the crown,
I ask'd—and Thou show'dst me a cross and a grave.

Subdu'd and instructed, at length, to Thy will,
My hopes and my longings I fain would resign;
O give me the heart that can wait and be still,
Nor know of a wish or a pleasure but thine!

There are mansions exempted from sin and from woe,
But they stand in a region by mortals untrod;
There are rivers of joy but they roll not below;
There is rest—but it dwells in the presence of God.

SIR ROBERT GRANT.

DYING AT SEA.

BROTHER, farewell! thy bed of death
Was tossed by many a rolling wave;
Here hast Thou drawn thy latest breath,
And the deep waters form thy grave.

Yet, where can that far spot be found,
  Which ship has sailed or wanderer trod,
Where man, an orphan, can look round,
  And say, " I'm here, beyond my God ?"

No kind soft hand attended near
  To close the eye in death grown dim ;
Yet thy Redeemer still was here,
  And who could hold thee up like Him ?

Thy heart's last breathing did not cease
  In thine own land and quiet home ;
Yet His kind Spirit whisper'd peace,
  In ocean's storm, and roar, and foam.

The green turf covers not thy breast,
  Nor to thy tomb do friends repair !
In ocean's caverns thou dost rest,
  Yet wilt thou sleep as sweetly there !

Sleeping in Jesus, 'tis as well
  Beneath the deep sea-wave to lie.
As where our dearest kindred dwell,
  And seen by every passer by.

In faith repose, from that low bed
Pure and immortal shalt thou rise:
The voice, "O sea, give up thy dead!"
Shall call thee to the opening skies.

EDMESTON.

THE MOTHER'S DEATH.

THE mother's eye was closing,
The world had pass'd away;
The spirit was composing
To leave her cell of clay;
Earth had not fully faded,
The friends were felt around;
Yet heaven the sense pervaded,
And mixed its unheard sound:
A soft low voice was ringing
Sweet cadence by her side,
It seem'd the heavenly singing
Of some angelic guide.
While in infancy I wander'd
Thou didst watch my little feet;
Oft my childhood thou hast ponder'd,
Oft for me thy heart did beat.
On that bosom I have slumber'd,
Thou hast sung me oft to rest:
Come, my mother, unincumber'd
Rise, and join with me the blest.

Many years I here have tarried,
Years of joy no tongue can speak;
But I watched thee oft, and carried
Aidance to thy soul when weak.
Come with me where flows the river
From the everlasting throne;
Where the Saviour is the giver
Of the joy there felt alone!
Then, when life had fully ended,
The mother turned and smiled,
Her soul to heaven ascended,
Clasp'd by her angel child.

EDMESTON.

RESIGNATION.

SHE is not dead—the child of our affection,
But gone unto that school
Where she no longer needs our poor protection,
And Christ Himself doth rule.

In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion,
By guardian angels led,
Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,
She lives, whom we call dead.

Day after day, we think what she is doing
In those bright realms of air;
Year after year her tender steps pursuing,
Behold her grown more fair.

Thus do we walk with her, and keep unbroken
The bond which nature gives,
Thinking that our remembrance, though unspoken,
May reach her where she lives.

We will be patient and assuage the feeling
We may not wholly stay;
By silence sanctifying, not concealing,
The grief that must have way.

LONGFELLOW.

THOUGH dear the form, and loved the heart,
We now commit to dust,
No virtues of the dead impart
Our spirits' holiest trust.

Those virtues mem'ry oft shall trace
With sad, yet placid brow;
But Christian faith and Christian grace
Must be our refuge now

The light they lend alone can cheer
The dark and silent tomb;
Can hush the sigh, make bright the tear,
And glory give for gloom.

We would not mourn as those that see
No hope beyond the grave;
Before Thee, Lord, we bend the knee,
The Comforter we crave.

BARTON.

O CHILD of sorrow, be it thine to know
That Scripture only is the cure of woe;
That field of promise—how it flings abroad
Its perfume o'er the Christian's thorny road;
The soul, reposing in assured belief,
Feels herself happy amidst all her grief;
Forgets her labour as she toils along,
Weeps tears of joy, and bursts into a song.

COWPER.

THE air is full of farewells to the dying,
And mournings for the dead;
The heart of Rachael for her children crying
Will not be comforted.

Let us be patient. These severe afflictions
Not from the *ground* arise;
But oftentimes celestial benedictions
Assume this dark disguise.

We see but dimly through the mists and vapours
Amid these earthly damps;
What seem to us but sad funereal tapers,
May be heaven's distant lamps.

There is no death. What *seems* so is transition;
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the life Elysian,
Whose portals we call death.

LONGFELLOW.

SACRIFICES WATERED WITH TEARS.

HE was Thy child, my Father—and shall we
Gaze on the holy angels tearfully,
Because when sent into Thy fields to glean
They choose the ripest ears, and leave the green;
Lord of the harvest, is not this Thy field,
This earth on which the precious seed was cast?
Thine is the increase—gladly would we yield
The offering of our first-fruits and our last.

Yet pardon us, O Lord, if thus we bring
  Our sacrifices watered with our tears;
It is not that we grudge the offering,
  For Thee alone we cherished it for years.
Meanwhile the roots struck deeper every day;
We did but weep while it was torn away.

From "The Dove on the Cross."

DEATH OF A CHRISTIAN.

Thou art gone to the grave—but we will not deplore thee
Tho' sorrows and darkness encompass the tomb;
The Saviour has passed through its portals before thee,
And the lamp of His love is thy guide through the gloom.

hou art gone to the grave—we no longer behold thee,
Nor tread the rough path of the world by thy side;
But the wide arms of mercy are spread to enfold thee,
And sinners may hope, since the Sinless has died.

Thou art gone to the grave, and its mansion forsaking,
Perhaps thy tried spirit in doubt lingered long;
But the sunshine of heaven beamed bright on thy waking,
And the song which thou heard'st was the seraphim's song.

Thou art gone to the grave—but 'twere wrong to deplore thee,
When God was thy ransom, thy Guardian, thy Guide;
He gave thee, He took thee, and soon will restore thee,
Where death hath no sting, since the Saviour has died.

HEBER.

THOUH unseen by human eye,
My Redeemer's hand is nigh;
He has poured salvation's light
Far within the vale of night;
There will God my steps control,
There His presence bless my soul.
Lord, whate'er my sorrows be,
Teach me to look up to Thee.

KLOPSTOCK.

SUBMISSION.

THINK not, O my soul, to keep
  Thy progress on to God,
By any road less rough and steep
  Than that thy fathers trod.
In tears and trials thou must sow
  To reap in joy and love.
We cannot find our home below,
  And hope for one above.

No—here we labour, watch, and pray,
  Our rest and peace are there—
God will not take the thorn away,
  But gives us strength to bear.
The holiest, greatest, best have thus
  In wisdom learnt to grow;
Yea, He that gave Himself for us
  Was perfected by woe.

And shall I murmur or repine
  At aught Thy hand may send?
To whom should I my cause resign,
  If not to such a friend?
Where love and wisdom deign to choose,
  Shall I the choice condemn;
Or dare the medicine to refuse
  That is prescribed by them?

As woods, when shaken by the breeze,
  Take deeper, firmer root;
As winter's frosts but make the trees
  Abound in summer's fruit;
So every heaven-sent pang and throe
  That Christian firmness tries
But nerves us for our work below,
  And forms us for the skies.

H. F. Lyte.

A Few brief moons the babe who slumbers here
Smiled on her parents, and that innocent smile
Was daylight to their eyes. They thought her fair,
And gentle, and intelligent, and dared
To lean their hearts upon her. There are ways
And looks of hers that long will dwell with them,
And there are bright anticipations held,
How fondly and how feelingly resign'd!
Her very helplessness endear'd her to them,
And made her more their own. But this is done;
The wintry wind pass'd o'er the opening flower
And nipp'd it in the bud—and it is gone.

Still there is comfort left. It still is joy
That they can lift their weeping eyes to heaven,
And think that one of theirs is settled there;
Can know, beyond the shadow of a doubt,

That she is safe with Him who bears the lambs
Within His bosom, and, no longer babe,
But angel, now beholds her Father's face,
And shares the fulness of eternal joy.

Sweet spirit! since now the ministry of love
From God to erring man is thine, O draw
The souls of those who loved thee to the place
Where thou art gone before them; make them feel
That earth is not their home; O fix their thoughts
On heaven, on Him who once on earth took up
Babes such as thou, and blessed them, and bade all
Who look'd for heaven become like babes,—like thee,
Pure, innocent, lowly, loving, and new born.

H. F. Lyte.

THE SACRIFICE.

"God loveth a cheerful giver."

What shall I tender Thee, Father Supreme,
For Thy rich gifts, and this the best of all,—
Said the young mother, as she fondly watched
Her sleeping babe. There was an answering voice
That night in dreams.

Thou hast a tender flower
Upon thy breast, fed with the dews of love;
Lend me that flower, such flowers there are in
Heaven;
But there was silence, yea a hush so deep,
Breathless and terror stricken, that the lip
Blanched in its trance.

Thou hast a little harp,
How sweetly would it swell the angel's hymn;
Yield me that harp.

There rose a shuddering sob,
As if the bosom by some hidden sword
Was cleft in twain.

Morn came, a blight had found
The crimson velvet of the unfolding bud,
The harp strings rang a thrilling strain and broke.
And that young mother lay upon the earth
In childless agony.

Again the voice that stirred the vision—
He who asked of thee, loveth a cheerful giver.
So she raised her gushing eyes,
And ere the tear-drop dried upon its fringes, smiled,
And that meek smile, like Abram's faith,
Was counted righteousness.

ANON.

ON THE DEATH OF AN INFANT.

Why dost thou weep? Say, can it be
Because for ever blest—and free
From sin, from sorrow, and from pain,
Thy babe shall never weep again;
Shall never feel, shall never know
E'en half thy little load of woe?

What was thy prayer, when his first smile
Did thy young mother-heart beguile?
When his first cry was in thine ear,
And on thy cheek his first warm tear,
And to thy heart at first were prest
The throbbings of his little breast?

What was thy prayer? Canst thou not now
See in his bright unclouded brow,
Hear in his soft seraphic strain,
So full of joy, so free from pain,
An answer as if God did speak
To all thy love had dared to seek?

Why, therefore, weep, when all the cares,
The doubts the troubles, and the snares,

The threatening clouds, the falling tears,
Childhood's wild hopes, and manhood's fears,
That might have been for him, for thee,
Have passed away and ne'er shall be.

He scarcely suffered, then was crowned;
Was scarcely lost, till he was found;
And scarcely heaved one heavy sigh,
Then entered immortality—
A child of thine, a child of bliss!
Why, therefore, weep for joy like this?

Nay, rather strive to praise the love
That could so tenderly reprove,
That when it wounded, left no sting
Of self consuming suffering;
But with thy profit, linked the joy
Of thy beloved sainted boy.

J. MONSELL.

THEN weep not; but alike
Adore a "taking" and a "giving" God.
Deem not these blossoms prematurely pluck'd.
Let those who make this fleeting earth their all,
And its horizon bound their happiness,
Talk of *untimely graves!* No flower can drop
Too soon, if ripe for glory. Early pluck'd,

Is early bliss. If the great clock of time
Has in life's dawn of morning toll'd its knell,
And numbered earthly hours, it hastens heaven.
An early death bed is an early crown!
Now unfulfill'd one wish alone remains,—
That those belov'd on earth, endear'd by bonds
Defying dissolution, left behind
To rough the winter's blast, may soon arise,
The deathless glory of the soul to share,
"Not lost but gone before."

Psalm lxxiii. 25.—Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee.

Lord of earth! thy forming hand
Well this beauteous frame hath planned,—
Woods that wave, and hills that tower,—
Ocean rolling in his power,—
All that strikes the gaze unsought,—
All that charms the lonely thought,—
Friendship,—gem transcending price,—
Love,—a flower from Paradise,—
Yet amidst this scene so fair,
Should I cease thy smile to share,
What were all its joys to me?
Whom have I on earth but Thee?

Lord of heaven! beyond our sight
Rolls a world of purer light;
There, in love's unclouded reign,
Parted hands shall clasp again;
Martyrs there, and prophets high,
Blaze a glorious company;
While immortal music rings
From unnumber'd seraph strings;
O! that world is passing fair;
Yet if Thou wert absent there,
What were all its joys to me?
Whom have I in heaven but Thee?

Lord of earth and heaven! my breast
Seeks in Thee its only rest;
I was lost; Thy accents mild
Homeward lured thy wandering child;
I was blind! Thy healing ray
Charm'd the long eclipse away;
Source of every joy I know,
Solace of my every woe,
O if once Thy smile divine
Ceased upon my soul to shine,
What were earth or heaven to me?
Whom have I in each but Thee?

SIR ROBERT GRANT.

When gath'ring clouds around I view,
And days are dark, and friends are few,
On Him I lean, who not in vain
Experienced every human pain;
He feels my griefs, allays my fears,
And counts and treasures up my tears.

When sorrowing o'er some stone I bend,
Which covers all that was a friend,
And from his voice, his hand, his smile,
Divides me, for a little while;
Thou, Saviour, mark'st the tears I shed,
For thou didst weep o'er Lazarus dead.

When vexing thoughts within me rise,
And sore dismay'd my spirit dies;
When writhing on the bed of pain
I supplicate for rest in vain;
Still, still my soul shall think on Thee,
Thy bloody sweat and agony

And oh, when I have safely past
Through every conflict but the last,
Wilt Thou who once for me hast bled—
In all my sickness make my bed?
Then bear me to that happier shore,
Where Thou shalt mark my woes no more.

Sir Robert Grant.

A FRAGMENT FROM THE GRAVE.

THRICE welcome Death!
That after many a painful step
Conducts us to our home, and lands us safe
On the long wished for shore. Prodigious change!
Our bane turned to a blessing. Death disarm'd
Loses its fellness quite; all thanks to Him
Who scourged the venom out; sure the last end
Of the good man is peace. How calm his exit!
Night dews fall not more gently to the ground,
Nor weary worn out winds expire so soft.
Behold him in the ev'ning-tide of life,
A life well spent, whose early care it was
His riper years should not upbraid his green;
By unperceiv'd degrees he wears away;
Yet, like the sun, seems larger at his setting!
High in his faith and hopes, look how he reaches
After the prize in view! and like a bird
That's hampered, struggles hard to get away!
Whilst the glad gates of sight are wide expanded
To let new glories in, the first fair fruits
Of the fast coming harvest. Then, O then,
Each earth-born joy grows vile, or disappears,
Shrunk to a thing of nought. Oh! how he longs
To have his passport sign'd, and be dismiss'd!
'Tis done, and now he's happy. The glad soul

Has not a wish uncrown'd. E'en the lag flesh
Rests too in hope of meeting once again
Its better half, never to sunder more.
Nor shall it hope in vain: the time draws on
When not a single spot of burial-earth,
Whether on land or in the spacious sea,
But must give back its long committed dust
Inviolate: and faithfully shall these
Make up the full account; not the least atom
Embezzled or mislaid of the whole tale,
Each soul shall have a body ready furnish'd;
And each shall have his own. Hence ye profane!
Ask not how this can be? Sure the same power
That rear'd the piece at first, and took it down,
Can re-assemble the loose scattered parts,
And put them as they were. Almighty God
Has done much more; nor is His arm impaired
Through length of days; and what He can He will;
His faithfulness stands bound to see it done.
'Tis but a night, a long and moonless night,
We make the grave our bed, and then are gone.
Thus at the shut of even, the weary bird
Leaves the wide air, and in some lonely brake
Cowers down, and dozes till the dawn of day,
Then claps his well-fledg'd wings and bears away.

ROBERT BLAIR.

Our lives are rivers, gliding free
To that unfathomed, boundless sea,
The silent grave!
Thither all earthly pomp and boast
Roll, to be gathered up and lost
In one dark wave.

Thither the mighty torrents stray,
Thither the brook pursues its way,
And tinkling rill.
There all are equal. Side by side,
The poor man and the son of pride
Lie calm and still.

To one alone my thoughts arise,
The Eternal Truth—the Good—the Wise—
To Him I cry.
Who shared on earth our common lot,—
But the world comprehended not
His deity.

This world is but the rugged road
Which leads us to the bright abode
Of peace above:
So let us choose that narrow way,
Which leads no traveller's foot astray
From realms of love.

Translated from the Spanish by Longfellow.

HOME.

Home that is dear to all—how dear to me,
Beyond what other homes could e'er display!
Fancy recalls the scenes, and I can see
In thought those here who now have passed away.
My children's spirits walk in every room;
Here they were born, here lived, and in young years
Hence were they carried to an early tomb,
Deep mourn'd and sprinkled by love's many tears;
Yet do they seem around me, when I think
Here sat one treasure, there another played;
The form, the smile, the voice, death could not sink,
Nor cover by the grave's concealing shade.
Unseen, they yet seem present—pleasing pain!
When will the circle be complete again?

Edmeston.

What matters it, if safe in Christ we sleep,
Where is our grave, and in what place we die?
Whether we sink into the mighty deep,
Or in our native village churchway lie,
Where many a friendly footstep passes by,
And where the tablet, or the bed of green,
Beside the oft-frequented pathway seen,
Calls forth the tear from friendship's gazing eye?

True, might I choose, much rather would I be
Wrapt in the green turf of my own dear home;
But this is weakness—for the pathless sea,
Or wheresoever exile man may roam,
Is safe alike, and yon high azure dome
Circles alike the mighty treasury
Of what in every age and land the just
Have in full faith committed to His trust.

EDMESTON.

PATIENCE IN AFFLICTION.

"Our way to eternal joy is to suffer here with Christ."

MOURNER in Zion! do not weep,
The Lord thou lov'st may long delay;
Yet still thy patient vigils keep;
That soothing voice shall all repay.

O weep no more! thy God shall hear:
From dwellings of adversity
Thine humble cry shall reach His ear,
And soon His voice shall answer thee.

And though His hand to thee may deal
The bitter bread of earthly woe,
And though across thy path may steal
The waves of sorrow, sad and slow—

A time shall come, when, O how sweet!
A voice, a heavenly voice, shall say,—
"This is the pathway for thy feet;
Turn hither turn, no more to stray."

And He shall give thee songs of cheer,
And O how blessed thy heart shall be!
Mourner in Zion, dry the tear,
The Lord thy God shall comfort thee.

O Friend, high thanks I owe thee not alone,
That when I did a stricken mourner stand
Beside a grave, thou cheer'dst me with true tone,
And the firm pressure of a faithful hand;

It is not for this loving sympathy,
But for an higher blessing, thanks I owe,
Thanks owe thee for a lesson plain yet high;
Taught in thy darker hour of heavier woe.

Fain had I been to shrink with coward mind,
Not merely from an idle world's turmoil,
But even from friendly greetings of my kind,
Yea, quite to shun my life's appointed toil.

But when hereafter shall to me betide
Sorrow or pain, oh, then not any more
May I so seek to thrust my tasks aside;
Oh, then may I retain a nobler lore.

From common burdens no exemption ask,
But in sustaining them best comfort find;
As knowing life has evermore a task,
Which must be done—with glad or sorrowing mind;

That pleasure, as it came, even so departs,
But duty life's true star, doth fixed remain.
This lesson graven on my heart of hearts,
This from thy converse is my latest gain.

R. C. Trench.

THE SEA-BIRD.

I've watched the sea-bird calmly glide
Unruffled o'er the ocean tide:
Unscared she heard the waters roar
In foaming breakers on the shore;
Fearless of ill, herself she gave
To rise upon the lifting wave,
Or sink to be awhile unseen,
The undulating swells between:

Till, as the evening shadows grew,
Noiseless, unheard, aloft she flew.
While soaring to her rock-built nest
A sunbeam lighted on her breast,—
A moment glittered in mine eye,
Then quickly vanished through the sky.

While by the pebbly beach I stood,
That sea-bird on the waving flood,
Pictured to my enraptured eye
A soul at peace with God:—Now high,
Now low, upon the gulf of life
Raised or depressed, in peace or strife,
Calmly she kens the changeful wave,
She dreads no storm—she fears no grave;
To her, the world's tumultuous roar
Dies like the echo on the shore.
"Father! thy pleasure all fulfil,
I yield me to Thy sovereign will;
Let earthly comforts ebb or rise,
Tranquil on Thee my soul relies."

THAT name! how often every day
We spake it and we heard;
It was to us mid tasks or play,
A common household world.

'Tis breathed yet, that name—but oh!
How solemn now the sound;
One of the sanctities which throw
Such awe our homes around.

R. C. TRENCH.

They sin who tell us love can die,
With life all other passions fly,
All others are but vanity.
In heaven ambition cannot dwell,
Nor avarice in the vaults of hell;
Earthly these passions of the earth,
They perish where they had their birth;
But love is indestructible.
Its holy flame for ever burneth,
From Heaven it came, to heaven returneth;
Too oft on earth a troubled guest,
At times deceived, at times opprest,
It here is tried and purified;
Then hath in heaven its perfect rest;
It soweth here with toil and care,
But the harvest time of love is there.
Oh! when a mother meets on high
The babe she lost in infancy.

Hath she not then for pains and fears,
The day of woe, the watchful night,
For all her sorrow, all her tears,
An over payment of delight?

SOUTHEY.

PROV. XXIII. 26.—My son, give me thine heart.

FEELEST thou disquiet, care, unrest,
Scarce knowing why so sad thou art?
In God alone can man find rest:
Give Him thine heart.

Deemest thou thy bosom's secret woes
Peculiar from all else apart?
Thy case He intimately knows:
Give Him thine heart.

Oft does the painful thought arise,
That slighted, misconceived, thou art.
God knows thee, loves, will not despise:
Give Him thine heart.

Sailest thou alone o'er life's rough sea,
Without a home, a friend, a chart?
Thy friend, guide, haven, God will be:
Give Him thine heart.

Dost thou some hopeless sorrow feel,
Some wound from death's unpitying dart?
Thy God will bind it up and heal:
Give Him thine heart.

Are there some griefs thou canst not tell,
Not to the dearest friends impart?
Thy God will understand them well:
Give Him thine heart.

Oh! when without reserve 'tis given,
Wholly surrendered, every part,
There shines within the dawn of heaven:
Give Him thine heart.

C. E.

THE THREE SONS.

I HAVE a son, a little son, a boy just five years old,
With eyes of thoughtful earnestness, and mind of gentle mould;
They tell me that unusual grace in all his ways appears,
That my child is grave and wise of heart beyond his childish years.

I cannot say how this may be, I know his face
is fair.
And yet his chiefest comeliness is his sweet and
serious air;
I know his heart is kind and fond, I know he
loveth me,
But loveth yet his mother more with grateful
fervency:
But that which others most admire is the thought
which fills his mind,
The food for grave enquiring speech he everywhere
doth find.
Strange questions doth he ask of me when we
together walk;
He scarcely thinks as children think, or talks as
children talk;
Nor cares he much for childish sports, dotes not
on bat or ball,
But looks on manhood's ways and works, and aptly
mimics all.
His little heart is busy still, and oftentimes perplext
With thoughts about this world of ours, and
thoughts about the next;
He kneels at his dear mother's knee, she teacheth
him to pray,
And strange, and sweet, and solemn then are the
words which he will say.

Oh, should my gentle child be spared to manhood's years like me,
A holier and a wiser man I trust that he will be:
And when I look into his eyes, and stroke his thoughtful brow,
I dare not think what I should feel, were I to lose him now.

I have a son, a second son, a simple child of three;
I'll not declare how bright and fair his little features be,
How silver sweet those tones of his when he prattles on my knee:
I do not think his light blue eye is, like his brother's, keen,
Nor his brow so full of childish thought as his hath ever been;
But his little heart's a fountain pure of kind and tender feeling;
And his every look's a gleam of light, rich depths of love revealing.
When he walks with me, the country folk, who pass us in the street,
Will shout for joy, and bless my boy, he looks so mild and sweet.

A playfellow is he to all, and yet, with cheerful tone,
Will sing his little song of love when left to sport alone.
His presence is like sunshine sent to gladden home and hearth,
To comfort us in all our griefs, and sweeten all our mirth.
Should he grow up to riper years, God grant his heart may prove
As sweet a home for heavenly grace as now for earthly love:
And if, beside his grave, the tears our aching eyes must dim,
God comfort us for all the love which we shall lose in him.

I have a son, a third sweet son, his age I cannot tell
For they reckon not by years and months where he is gone to dwell.
To us, for fourteen anxious months, his infant smiles were given,
And then he bade farewell to earth, and went to live in heaven.

I cannot tell what form is his, what looks he weareth now,
Nor guess how bright a glory crowns his shining seraph brow.
The thoughts that fill his sinless soul, the bliss which he doth feel,
Are number'd with the secret things which God will not reveal.
But I know (for God hath told me this), that he is now at rest,
Where other blessed infants be, on their Saviour's loving breast.
I know his spirit feels no more this weary load of flesh,
But his sleep is blessed with endless dreams of joy for ever fresh.
I know the angels fold him close beneath their glittering wings,
And soothe him with a song that breathes of heaven's divinest things.
I know that we shall meet our babe, (his mother dear and I,)
Where God for aye shall wipe away all tears from every eye.
Whate'er befalls his brethren twain, *his* bliss can never cease;
Their lot may here be grief and fear, but his is certain peace.

It may be that the tempter's wiles their souls from
bliss may sever,
But, if our own poor faith fail not, *he* must be ours
for ever.
When we think of what our darling is, and what
we still must be—
When we muse on *that* world's perfect bliss, and
this world s misery—
When we groan beneath this load of sin, and feel
this grief and pain—
Oh! we'd rather lose our other two, than have him
here again.

J. Moultrie.

MY BROTHER'S GRAVE.

Beneath the chancel's hallow'd stone,
Exposed to every rustic tread;
To few, save rustic mourners known,
My brother, is thy lowly bed.
Few words upon the rough stone graven,
Thy name, thy birth, thy youth declare,
Thy innocence, thy hopes of heaven,
In simplest phrase recorded there.
No 'scutcheons shine, no banners wave,
In mockery o'er my brother's grave.

It is not long since thou wert wont
Within these sacred walls to kneel;
This altar, that baptismal font,
These stones which now thy dust conceal,
The sweet tones of the Sabbath bell,
Were holiest objects to thy soul;
On these thy spirit loved to dwell,
Untainted by the world's control.
My brother, those were happy days,
When thou and I were children yet;
How fondly memory still surveys
Those scenes the heart can ne'er forget.
My soul was then, as thine is now,
Unstain'd by sin, unstung by pain;
Peace smiled on each unclouded brow,
Mine ne'er will be so calm again.
I feel not now as then I felt,
The sunshine of my heart is o'er;
The spirit now is changed which dwelt
Within me, as in days before.

But *thou* wert snatch'd, my brother, hence,
In all thy guileless innocence.
One Sabbath saw thee bend the knee
In reverential piety,
For childish faults forgiveness crave;
The next beam'd brightly on thy grave.

The crowd, of which thou late wert one,
Now throng'd across thy burial stone,
Where thou lay'st mould'ring and forgot;
And some few gentler bosoms wept
In silence, where my brother slept.

And years have pass'd, and thou art now
Forgotten in thy silent tomb;
And cheerful is my mother's brow,
My father's eye has lost its gloom;
And years have pass'd, and death has laid
Another victim by thy side;
With thee he roams, an infant shade,
But not more pure than thou he died.
Blest are ye both, your ashes rest
Beside the spot ye loved the best;
And that dear home which saw your birth,
O'erlooks you in your bed of earth.
But who can tell what blissful shore,
Your angel spirits wander o'er?
And who can tell what raptures high
Now bless your immortality?

My boyish days are nearly gone,
My breast is not unsullied now;
And worldly cares and woes will soon
Cut their deep furrows on my brow;

And life will take a darker hue
From ills my brother never knew.
And I have made me bosom friends,
And loved and link'd my heart with others;
But who with mine his spirit blends,
As mine was blended with my brother's?
When years of rapture glided by,
The spring of life's unclouded weather,
Our souls were knit, and thou and I,
My brother, grew in love together.
The chain is broke which bound us then—
When shall I find its like again?

J. MOULTRIE.

THERE's nothing bright above, below,
From flowers that bloom, to stars that glow,
But in its light my soul can see
Some feature of Thy deity.
There's nothing dark below, above,
But in its gloom I trace Thy love,
And calmly wait the moment when
Thy touch shall make all bright again.

ANON.

Why fear the path of grief to tread.
Why, Father, shrink from Thy decree,
If thus my erring soul be led
A safer, shorter way to Thee?
On wings of faith, o'er mists of earth,
Thy servant, Father, teach to rise,
And view the blessings' native worth,
Cleared from affliction's dark disguise.
Yon clouds, a mass of sable shade
To mortals gazing from below,
By angels from above surveyed,
With universal sunshine glow.

GISBORNE.

Oh! Child of Grief, why weepest thou?
Why droops thy sad and mournful brow?
Why is thy look so like despair?
What deep, sad sorrow lingers there?

Thou mourn'st, perhaps, for some one gone—
A friend, a wife, a little one;
Yet mourn not, for thou hast above
A friend in God, and "God is love."

In all the varying scenes of woe—
The lot of fallen man below—
Still lift thy tearful eye above,
And hope in God, for "God is love."

Sweet is the thought, time flies apace—
This earth is not our resting place;
And sweet the promise of the Lord,
To all who love His name and word.

Then, weeping pilgrim, dry thy tears,
Comfort on every side appears;
An eye beholds thee from above,
The eye of God, and "God is love."

ANON.

NOWHERE canst thou so magnify thy God
As in the furnace-fires! Submissive tears,
Wrung from the grieved yet unrepining heart,
In silent eloquence proclaim the power
Of Christian faith;—a living evidence
To an ungodly world, that gospel peace
Is no vague theory. Mourner in Zion!
In this thou hast a mean of glorifying
The Lord who loved thee, angels cannot have.
Meek acquiescence is a grace unknown
In heav'n, where trial enters not. No cup

Of anguish'd sorrow there to drink, no tears
Through which with murmuring lips to breathe,
"Father, Thy will be done!" Oh, may'st thou not
(If thy submission has one sinner led
To magnify the grace which thee sustain'd
So wondrously) with humble praise rejoice?
And, looking forward to eternity,
Would not thy sorest tribulations prove
Their own best recompence, if through the years
Of never-ending bliss one voice were heard
To own that these thy sorrows, sanctified,
Had proved the means of leading it to heaven.

ANON.

THE GRAVES OF A HOUSEHOLD.

THEY grew in beauty, side by side,
They filled one home with glee;—
Their graves are sever'd far and wide,
By mount, and stream, and sea!

The same fond mother bent at night
O'er each fair sleeping brow;
She had each folded flower in sight:—
Where are those dreamers now?

One 'midst the forests of the west,
By a dark stream is laid;
The Indian knows his place of rest,
Far in the cedar shade.

The sea, the blue lone sea hath one;
He lies where pearls lie deep;
He was the lov'd of all, yet none
O'er his low bed may weep.

One sleeps where southern vines are dress'd
Above the noble slain;
He wrapp'd his colours round his breast
On a blood-red field of Spain.

And one,—o'er her the myrtle showers
Its leaves by soft winds fann'd;
She faded 'midst Italian bowers
The last of that bright band.

And parted thus, they rest who play'd
Beneath the same green tree,
Whose voices mingled as they pray'd
Around one parent knee!

They that with smiles lit up the hall,
And cheered with song the hearth,—
Alas, for love, if thou wert all,
And nought beyond on earth!

MRS. HEMANS.

"OH, shall frail man heav'n's dread decree gainsay,
Which bade the series of events extend
Wide thro' unnumbered worlds, and ages without end?
One part, one little part, we dimly scan,
Thro' the dark medium of life's feverish dream,
Yet dare arraign the whole stupendous plan,
If but that little part incongruous seem;
Nor is that part, perhaps, what mortals deem.
Oft from apparent ills our blessings rise;
O then renounce that impious self-esteem,
That aims to trace the secrets of the skies,
For thou art but dust: be humble and be wise."

Beattie's Minstrel.

WHAT, many times I musing asked, is man,
If grief and care
Keep far from him? He knows not what he can,
What cannot bear.

He, till the fire hath purged him, doth remain
But merely dross:
To lack the loving discipline of pain
Were endless loss.

Yet, when my Lord did ask me on what side—
I were content
The grief, whereby I must be purified,
To me were sent.

As each imagined anguish did appear,
Each withering bliss,
Before my soul, I cried, "Oh spare me here,
Oh no; not this!"—

Like one that having need of, deep within,
The surgeon's knife,
Would hardly bear that it should graze the skin,
Though for his life.

Nay then but He, who best doth understand
Both what we need
And what can bear, did take my case in hand,
Nor crying heed.

R. C. Trench.

"Millions of spiritual beings walk this earth."—
MILTON.

OFT as in rural walks I stray,
Or lone and silent sit alone;
I think—along this quiet way,
Or in this still and empty room,

How many here on me may gaze,
Of spirits dwelling now apart,
With whom, in far-departed days,
I held communion heart to heart!

A friend's, a brother's, sister's eye,
May watch me, though I know it not;
And angel footsteps wander by,
And hold communion thought to thought.

Never could I the hope resign—
The thought in love's sweet creed so dear;
That those once mine are ever mine,
Though gross material disappear.

The same soft smile the tender care,
The anxious wish attend me still,
And ministering spirits there
Direct my feet away from ill.

Well! with this thought I'll pass my days,
Till I shall be a spirit too;
And watch like them the devious ways
Of those whom once on earth I knew.

How sweet to guard the child I left
A wanderer yet on earth's low plain,
To lead and shield a wife bereft,
To cheer and soothe the heart's deep pain!

And often tarry here awhile,
Ere life's swift flying hour be past;
When with a welcome speaking smile,
I lead them home to heaven at last.

There, with the myriads round the throne,
Love's little circle all entire,
Sound the loud song of highest tone,
And ring the seraph's harp of fire.

EDMESTON.

A FRAGMENT.

So she is in her earthly bed,—
  Her place in this world's void for aye;
She rests among the saintly dead,
  Asleep until the judgment day;
And they who loved her vainly long
For her sweet looks, and words, and song.

They look and long; beside their hearth
They listen for her voice in vain;
By day or night, in grief or mirth,
They may not hear its tones again:
With craving heart, and aching eye,
They seek her still unconsciously.

And poor men weep upon her grave
For many a blessing now no more:
The words she spake, the gifts she gave,
The balm her kindness loved to pour
Into their bleeding hearts, when care,
And want, and grief, were rankling there.

Why do we weep? Yes, weep for her?
The freed from earth—the housed in heaven?
Triumphant o'er the sepulchre,—
Her sorrows past, her sins forgiven!
To weep for her! it must not be;
Our tears would blot her victory.

Nay, hymn her flight with rapturous songs;
For she, in Death's embrace, hath done
With human griefs, and fears, and wrongs;
Her fight is fought, her triumph won.
A glorious crown is round her brow,
She dwells beside her Saviour now.

Weep not, or weep as those should weep
Whose hope is stronger than their sorrow;
To-night our loved and lost ones sleep,
But Christ will bring them back to-morrow.
We shall not long lament them here,
Our home is in a brighter sphere.

J. MOULTRIE.

HEBREWS XI. 16.—He hath prepared for them a city.

JERUSALEM, my happy home!
Name ever dear to me!
When shall my labours have an end,
In joy, and peace, with thee?

When shall these eyes thy heaven-built walls
And pearly gates behold?
Thy bulwarks with salvation strong,
And streets of shining gold?

O when, thou City of my God,
Shall I thy courts ascend,
Where congregations ne'er break up,
And Sabbaths have no end?

There happier bowers than Eden's bloom
Nor sin nor sorrow know;
Bless'd seats! thro' rude and stormy scenes
I onward press to you.

Why should I shrink at pain and woe,
Or feel at death dismay?
I've Canaan's goodly land in view,
And realms of endless day.

Apostles, martyrs, prophets, there
Around my Saviour stand;
And soon my friends in Christ below
Will join the glorious band.

Jerusalem! my happy home,
My soul still pants for thee;
Then shall my sorrows have an end,
When I thy joys shall see.

ANON.

THE BURIAL SERVICE.

"The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

BUT, lo! where by yon gleaming tower
The sun sinks to the western bower,

As weeping mourners stand around,
Like evening dews there falls a sound
On hearts by sorrow withered,
The words of Him who woke the dead.

"Oh Father of the fatherless, to Thee
We turn, sole comforter, and seek release;
When shall Thy better kingdom come, and we
Be gathered to Thy feet, and be at peace?

"Thou giv'st and tak'st away, Thy name be blest;
Fain would we have that cup to pass away,
But may Thy will be done; only our rest
To know that Thou art good, and to obey.

"Thy will be done on earth as 'tis in heaven;
Give us enough each day to bear us on,
'Tis not our home; and as we have forgiven,
Forgive us e'er we die, for Thy dear Son.

"Look on us, for like leaves we haste away
And are not; to Thy mercy let us cling
Till we have pass'd this world of evil sway;
Hide us beneath the shelter of Thy wing."

REV. I. WILLIAMS.

Though the fig-tree my bower that o'ershadowed
Refuse what it scattered before;
Though the vine's wreathed curtain, all faded,
Refresh with its clusters no more,—

Though the olive, loved symbol of heaven,
Be guarded and cherished in vain;
Though the field, for the blessing once given,
But the thorn and the thistle retain;—

Though the home where the herd is retreating
Its sweet flowing stores should withhold;
Nor voice of the flock's tender bleating
Be heard in the desolate fold;—

These joys are the moon-beam that waneth,
While the sun, whence it springs, is the same;
Jehovah, my Saviour, remaineth;
And I will rejoice in His name.

Undried is that fountain of pleasure,
Whose drops 'mid this wilderness fall:
Still safe, still untouched is my treasure;
For mine is the Giver of all. ANON.

THERE is a spirit o'er creation spread,
Though darkness draws its curtain round our head,
And sorrow's streams flow at our mortal feet;
There is a spirit, sanctified and sweet,
That breathes of other scenes and holier things,
Broods o'er the earth with healing on its wings,
And is a gracious messenger from heaven.
There is a spirit to our spirits given,
Which holds communion with our better part,
Which sheds a hallow'd influence on our heart,
Gives pinions to our thoughts, and to our prayers,
And harmonizes all our doubts and cares,
To seek submission.—An intelligence
That gladdens with its hidden influence
All space, all time, and trains our earthly eye
To bear the blaze of immortality.

BOWRING.

No mother's eye beside thee wakes to night,—
  No taper burns beside thy lonely bed;
Darkling thou liest, hidden out of sight,
  And none are near thee but the silent dead.

How cheerly glows this hearth, yet glows in vain,
  For we uncheered beside it sit alone,
And listen to the wild and beating rain
In angry gusts against our casement blown;

And though we nothing speak, yet well I know
That both our hearts are there, where thou dost keep
Within thy narrow chamber far below,
For the first time unwatched, thy lonely sleep.

O no, not thou! and we our faith deny,
This thought allowing; thou, removed from harms,
In Abraham's bosom dost securely lie,
Oh! not in Abraham's,—in a Saviour's arms.—

In that dear Lord's, who in thy worst distress,
Thy bitterest anguish, gave thee, dearest child,
Still to abide in perfect gentleness,
And like an angel to be meek and mild.

Sweet corn of wheat committed to the ground
To die, and live, and bear more precious ear,
While in the heart of earth thy Saviour found
His place of rest, for thee we will not fear.

Sleep softly, till that blessed rain and dew,
Down lighting upon earth, such change shall bring,
That all its fields of death shall laugh anew,
Yea, with a living harvest laugh and sing.

R. C. Trench.

TO A MOURNER.

A voice beloved thus spoke of late,
In sad yet chastened tone:
"My heart at times is desolate,
I feel alone!"

I looked upon that loved one's brow
And read the traces there,
Those who have suffered learn to know,
Of grief and care.

Though now the storms have pass'd away,
Enough remains to mark
That life has been a wintry day,
Stormy and dark.

So stands some tempest-riven tree,
Its fairest branches gone;
It ne'er what once it was, can be,
Ere storms came down.

Yet, mourner, tho' tears filled my eye,
And dimmed my thoughtful gaze,
I looked on thee rejoicingly,
And gave God praise.

What tho' thine earthly hopes are crushed,
Thine earthly wishes crossed,
Those voices sweet in silence hushed
That cheered thee most:

Does not a voice more cheering still,
New hopes, new joys impart?
And thoughts of holiest power instil,
To heal thy heart?

Hast thou not meekly learned to bow,
With acquiescing love,
To Him whose hand has brought thee low,
His love to prove?

Does not thy faith strike deeper roots?
Blest who that faith possess!
Are there not found the peaceful fruits
Of righteousness?

O yes! the process I behold,
And joyfully admire,
Through which thou wilt come forth as gold
Tried in the fire.

Concealed from man the dross may lie,
Now with the metal mixed;
But on it the refiner's eye
Is calmly fixed.

Nor will he leave (this thought is joy)
The gold he thus refines,
Till in it, pure from all alloy,
His image shines.

C. E.

SHORT EVENING HYMN.

Blessed be Thy name for ever,
Thou of life the guard and giver.
Thou canst guard Thy creatures sleeping,
Heal the heart long broke with weeping.
God of stillness and of motion,
Of the desert and the ocean,
Of the mountain, rock, and river,
Blessed be Thy name for ever.

Thou who slumberest not, nor sleepest,
Blest are they Thou kindly keepest;
God of evening's parting ray,
Of midnight's gloom and dawning day,

That rises from the azure sea,
Like breathings of eternity;
God of life, that fade shall never,
Blessed be Thy name for ever. HOGG.

I JOURNEY through a desert drear and wild,
Yet is my heart by such sweet thoughts beguiled,
Of Him on whom I lean, my strength, my stay,
I can forget the sorrows of the way.

Thoughts of His love—the root of every grace,
Which finds in this poor heart a dwelling place;
The sunshine of my soul, than day more bright,
And my calm pillow of repose by night,

Thoughts of His sojourn in this vale of tears—
The tale of love unfolded in those years
Of sinless suffering, and patient grace,
I love again, and yet again, to trace.

Thoughts of His glory—on the cross I gaze,
And there behold its sad, yet healing rays;
Beacon of hope, which lifted up on high,
Illumes with heav'nly light the tear-dimm'd eye.

Thoughts of His coming—for that joyful day,
In patient hope I watch, and wait, and pray;
The dawn draws nigh, the midnight shadows flee,
Oh, what a sun-rise will that advent be!

Thus while I journey on, my Lord to meet,
My thoughts and meditations are so sweet
Of Him on whom I lean, my strength, my stay,
I can forget the sorrows of the way.

M. J. D.

GOD OUR STRENGTH.

Man in his weakness needs a stronger stay
Than fellow-men, the holiest and the best:
And yet we turn to them from day to day,
As if in them our spirits could find rest.

Gently untwine our childish hands, that cling
To such inadequate supports as these,
And shelter us beneath thy heavenly wing,
Till we have learned to walk alone with ease.

Help us, O Lord, with patient love, to bear
Each other's faults, to suffer with true meekness;
Help us each other's joys and griefs to share,
But let us turn to Thee alone in weakness.

From "The Dove on the Cross."

THE CHRISTIAN DEAD.

Who are so greatly blessed?
From whom hath sorrow fled?
Who find such deep unbroken rest,
While all things toil? The dead!
The holy dead! Why weep ye so
Above their sable bier?
Thrice blessed! They have done with woe,
The living claim the tear.

We dream, but they awake;
Dark visions mar our rest;
'Mid thorns and snares our way we take,
And yet we mourn the bless'd:
For those who throng th' eternal throne,
Lost are the tears we shed:
They are the living, they alone,
Whom thus we call the dead. ANON.

"We walk by faith, not by sight."

When earth's support and comforts fail,
When shadows lengthen o'er the vale,
When those who loved us fall asleep,
And leave us still to watch and weep,
Then, grasp the hope so freely given,
Then turn from earth and look to heaven.

When still, where'er the eye be cast,
It meets a lone and dreary waste;
And stripped of all its summer leaves,
Life's wilderness thy spirit grieves,
Then to faith's eye new worlds are given;
Oh! turn from earth and look to heaven.

His hand, whose guidance cannot err,
Thy Father, Saviour, Comforter;
His whom thy heartfelt praises bless,
Guides, guards thee thro' the wilderness;
And hourly cordials shall be given,
Till earth shall be exchanged for heaven.

C. E.

AFFLICTIONS DO NOT COME ALONE.

O FONDLY loved, and deeply tried,
Already pierced by many a dart;
Once more is sorrow at thy side,
And bleeds again that wounded heart?
Art thou again a mourner left,
And the bereaved again bereft?

And I could sit beside thee now,
As Hebrew mourners sat of old;
With drooping head and downcast brow
Veiled in the mantle's ample fold;

With thee the watch of sorrow keep,
And speak not, but in silence weep.

Oh ! favoured they, like thee, who weep ;
And blessed is a grief like thine ;
Thou might'st not here thy loved ones keep,
But to thy God His gifts resign.
How sure a hope to thee is given,
Thy blessed ones are there in heaven.

A little longer wait and weep ;
A little longer watch and pray ;
Thy lonely path in patience keep,
A saddened, but a heavenward way.
Soon shalt thou see th' unfolding door,
And enter, to go out no more. J. A. E.

THE HAPPY FLIGHT.

Pray—said a mother, to her dying child ;
Pray—and in token of assent he smiled.
Most willing was the spirit, but so weak
The failing frame, that he could scarcely speak ;
At length he cried : " Dear mother, in God's Book,
Is it not written, ' Unto Jesus look ?' "

I can look up, I have no strength for prayer,
"Look unto me, and be ye saved, is there."
It is, my child, it is, thus saith the Lord,
And we may confidently trust His word.
Her son looked up, to Jesus raised his eyes,
And flew a happy spirit to the skies.

ANON.

SNOWDROPS.

My snowdrops, oh, my snowdrops!
How gaily every spring
They covered all our mossy banks
With many a fairy ring;
How delicately beautiful
Their little blossoms were,
Like tiny spirits hovering
Upon the chilly air.

My snowdrops, oh, my snowdrops!
I shall never, without pain,
See your little fragile blossoms
In the early spring again:
For my only one, my loved one,
A fragile thing like you,
Both came to me and left me
In the spring as snowdrops do.

Like the crimson light of sunset
  Streaming through a wreath of snow,
So soft upon her pallid cheek
  The hectic fever's glow;
As fading snowdrops gently sink
  Upon the cold earth's breast,
So gently sank my holy-child
  To her eternal rest.

My only one, my loved one.
  I shall see her yet again,
When I too am transplanted
  From this world of grief and pain.
Her snowdrops, oh! her snowdrops
  Shall be ever dear to me;
I will cherish them as emblems
  Of her immortality.

From "The Dove on the Cross."

Mark x. 14.—Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

What was thy life? A pearl cast up awhile
Upon the bank and shoal of time;—again,
Even as it did the gazer's eyes beguile,
To be drawn backward by the hungry main.

What was thy life? A flowering almond tree,
Which all too soon its blossoms did unfold;
And so must see their lustre presently
Dimmed, and their beauty nipped by envious cold.

What was thy life? A bright and beauteous flame,
Wherein, a season, light and joy we found;
But a swift sound of rushing tempest came,
It pass'd—and sparkless ashes strewed the ground.

What was thy life? A bird in infant's hand,
Held with too slight a grasp, and which, before
He knows or fears, its pinions doth expand,
And, with a sudden impulse, heavenward soar.

R. C. Trench.

Weep not, dear mother, weep not! I am blest,
And must leave heaven did I return to thee;
For I am where the weary are at rest,
The wicked cease from troubling. *Come to me.*

Thou art gone to thy rest, brother!
We will not weep for thee;
For thou art now where oft on earth
Thy spirit longed to be.

Thou art gone to thy rest, brother!
Thy toils and cares are o'er;
And sorrow, pain, and suffering now
Shall ne'er distress thee more.
Thou art gone to thy rest, brother!
Death had no sting for thee;
Thy dear Redeemer's might had gained
For thee the victory.
Thou art gone to thy rest, brother!
Thy sins are all forgiven;
And saints in light have welcomed thee
To share the joys of heaven.
Thou art gone to thy rest, brother!
And this shall be our prayer,—
That when we reach our journey's end,
Thy glory we may share.

ANON.

THERE is a Friend, more tender, true,
Than brother e'er can be:
Who, when all others bid adieu,
Remains—the last to flee;
Who, be their pathway bright or dim,
Deserts not those who turn to Him!

The heart by Him sustained, though deep
  Its anguish, still can bear;
The soul He condescends to keep,
  Shall never know despair;
In nature's weakness, sorrow's night,
God is its strength, its joy, its light.

He is the Friend who changeth not
  In sickness or in health;
Whether on earth our transient lot
  Be poverty or wealth;
In joy or grief, contempt or fame,
To all who seek Him still the same.

Of human hearts He holds the key;
  Is friendship meet for our's?
Oh! be assured that none but He
  Unlocks its purest powers;
He can recall the lost, the dead,
Or give us dearer in their stead.

BARTON.

DEATH.

ONE more place is void
By the bright hearth, and in the house of prayer.
  One more link destroyed
Of the soft chain which binds us everywhere—

A sigh is blended with the morning's breath;
For in the midst of life we are in death.

One more name to pass
Into the kingdom of the church asleep.
Dimly through a glass
We see Thy glory, and Thou see'st us weep—
When will the sound of tears on earth be stilled?
When, Lord, the number of Thy saints fulfilled?

ANON.

Who says the widow's heart must break,
The childless mother sink?—
A kinder truer voice I hear,
Which even beside that mournful bier
Whence parents' eyes would hopeless shrink,

Bids weep no more—O heart bereft,
How strange, to thee, that sound!
A widow o'er her only son,
Feeling more bitterly alone
For friends that press officious round.

Yet is the voice of comfort heard,
For Christ hath touched the bier—
The bearers wait with wondering eye,
The swelling bosom dares not sigh,
But all is still, 'twixt hope and fear.

Even such an awful soothing calm
We sometimes see alight
On Christian mourners, while they wait
In silence, by some churchyard gate,
Their summons to the holy rite.

And such the tones of love, which break
The stillness of that hour,
Quelling th' embittered spirit's strife—
"The Resurrection and the Life
Am I: believe, and die no more."

Unchang'd that voice—and though not yet
The dead sit up and speak,
Answering its call; we gladlier rest
Our darlings on earth's quiet breast,
And our hearts feel they must not break.

Far better they should sleep awhile
Within the Church's shade,
Nor wake, until new heaven, new earth
Meet for their new immortal birth
For their abiding-place be made,

Than wander back to life, and lean
On our frail love once more.
'Tis sweet, as year by year we lose
Friends out of sight, in faith to muse
How grows in Paradise our store.

Then pass, ye mourners, cheerly on,
Through prayer unto the tomb,
Still, as ye watch life's falling leaf,
Gathering from every loss and grief
Hope of new spring and endless home.

Then cheerly to your work again
With hearts new-brac'd and set
To run, untir'd, love's blessed race,
As meet for those, who face to face
Over the grave their Lord have met.

KEBLE.

"THERE is a calm the poor in spirit know,
That softens sorrow, and that sweetens woe;
There is a peace that dwells within the breast,
When all without is stormy and distrest;
There is a light that gilds the darkest hour,
When dangers threaten and when troubles lour;
That calm to faith, and hope, and love is given,
That peace remains, when all beside is riven,
That light shines down to man direct from heaven."

EDMESTON.

NOVEMBER.

THE autumn wind is moaning low the requiem of the year;
The days are growing short again, the fields forlorn and sere;

The sunny sky is waxing dim, and chill the hazy air;
And tossing trees before the breeze are turning brown and bare.

Those withered leaves, that slender song, a solemn truth convey,—
In wisdom's ear they speak aloud of frailty and decay:
They say, that man's apportioned year shall have its winter too;
Shall rise and shine, and then decline, as all around him do.

They tell him, all he has on earth, his brightest, dearest things,
His loves and friendships, joys and hopes, have all their falls and springs:
A wave upon the moonlit sea, a leaf before the blast,
A summer flower, an April shower, that gleams and hurries past.

And be it so: I know it well: myself, and all that's mine,
Must roll on with the rolling year, and ripen to decline.

I do not shun the solemn truth: to him it is not drear
Whose hopes can rise above the skies, and see a Saviour near.

It only makes him feel with joy this earth is not his home;
It sends him on from present ills to brighter hours to come:
It bids him take with thankful heart whate'er his God may send,
Content to go through weal or woe to glory in the end.

Then murmur on, ye wintry winds; remind me of my doom:
Ye lengthened nights still image forth the darkness of the tomb.
Eternal summer lights the heart where Jesus deigns to shine.
I mourn no loss, I shun no cross, so Thou, O Lord, art mine;

H. F. Lyte.

A DREAM.

I WALKED upon an unknown shore;
A deep, dark ocean rolled beside:
Thousands were wafted swiftly o'er
That silent and mysterious tide.

Strange was the solemn scene, and new:
My spirit sank with inward dread:
No voice proclaimed it; but I knew
Those were the regions of the dead.

It was no earthly light that shone,
Casting a shadowy gleam around;
Ne'er midst an earthly throng was known
Stillness so awful, so profound.

* * * * *

I sought with anxious eye to trace,
Among the crowd that thronged the coast,
The features of one well-known face,
Fondly beloved, and lately lost.

The twilight gleam sufficed to shew
Full many a face that once was fair,
Now marked with characters of woe,
The sad, sad impress of despair.

No words were needed to express
Whose tears of anguish fell too late;
The dark fixed look of mute distress
Declared too legibly their fate.

Some had been lovely once on earth,
Caressed, applauded, loved, admired,
Endowed with riches, talents, birth,
Possessing all their hearts desired.

Those hearts, alas, for them! were given
To earthly pleasures, cares, and toys;
They found not time to think of heaven,
To seek imperishable joys.

Slowly I turned, with many a sigh,
From this sad spectacle of woe;
And soon I saw the beaming eye
Of her so fondly loved below.

She had but just been called away,
From husband, parents, children, friends;
Yet in that eye there shone a ray
Of joy, with which no sadness blends.

A bright companion at her side
Looked on her with celestial love;
Delighting her glad steps to guide
Towards the bright home prepared above.

Unseen I followed; it was sweet,
Oh! passing sweet, her voice to hear;
No earthly language could repeat
The sounds that then entranced my ear.

Swiftly we passed that gloomy shore;
Darkness and clouds were all withdrawn;
And then a light not known before
Began upon our path to dawn.

With growing strength I saw her tread
Her upward, brightening, heavenward road;
With joy she lifted up her head
To hail the city of her God.

As nearer to that world we drew,
Immortal fragrance filled the air;
But soon the increasing radiance grew
Too bright for mortal sense to bear.

I only caught a distant glance
Of glories never to be told;
I saw a beauteous band advance;—
I heard them strike their harps of gold.

And then I lost her. Faint and dead
I sank beneath the eternal beam.
The sights, the sounds, the glories fled!
"I woke,—and found it was a dream."

C. E.

"Comfort us again now after the time that Thou hast afflicted us."

An open wound that has been healed anew;
A stream dried up that once again is fed
With waters, making green its grassy bed;
A tree that withered was, but to the dew
Puts forth young leaves and blossoms fresh of hue,
Even from the branches which had seemed most dead;
A sea which having been disquieted,
Now stretches like a mirror calm and blue,—

Our hearts like each of these were likened well.
But Thou wert the Physician and the balm;
Thou, Lord, the fountain, whence anew was filled
Their parched channel; Thou the dew that fell
On their dead branches; 'twas Thy voice that stilled
The storm within. Thou didst command the calm.

TRENCH.

FRIENDS SEPARATED BY DEATH.

FRIEND after friend departs;
Who hath not lost a friend?
There is no union here of hearts,
That finds not here an end:
Were this frail world our final rest,
Living or dying none were blest.

Beyond the flight of time,—
Beyond the reign of death,—
There surely is some blessed clime
Where life is not a breath;
Nor life's affections transient fire,
Whose sparks fly upward and expire.

There is a world above,
Where parting is unknown;
A long eternity of love
Formed for the good alone;

And faith beholds the dying here
Translated to that glorious sphere.

Thus star by star declines,
Till all are passed away;
As morning high and higher shines
To pure and perfect day;
Nor sink those stars in empty night,
But hide themselves in heaven's own light.

MONTGOMERY.

COMFORT OF PRAYER.

WHEN afflictions sore oppress you,
Low with grief and anguish bow'd,
Then to earnest prayer address you,
Prayer will help you through the cloud
Still to see your Saviour near
Under every cross you bear;
By the light His Word doth lend you,
Prayer will joy and comfort send you.

None shall ever be confounded
Who in God will freely trust;
Though by many woes surrounded
God's a rock to all the just:

Though you deem He hears you not,
Still your wants are ne'er forgot:
Cry to Him when storms assail you,
Let your courage never fail you.

Call on God, knock, seek, implore Him,
'Tis the Christian's noblest skill;
He who comes with faith before Him
Meets with help and favour still:
Who on God most firmly rest,
Are the wisest and the best;
God will with such strength imbue them,
Ne'er shall any foe subdue them.

Learn to mark God's wondrous dealing
With the people that He loves;
When His chastening hand they're feeling,
Then their faith the strongest proves:
God is nigh, and notes their tears,
Though He answers not, He hears;
Pray with faith, for though He try you,
No good thing can God deny you.

Ponder all God's truth can teach you,
Let His Word your footsteps guide;
Satan's wiles shall never reach you,
Though he draw the world aside:

Lo! God's truth is thy defence,
Light, and hope, and confidence;
Trust in God He'll not deceive you,
Pray, and all your foes will leave you.

ST. MATTHEW v. 4.

I STOOD in spirit on that sacred mount,
Where He who spoke as never man could speak,
With Godlike power and majesty, though meek,
Poured words of life from truth's eternal fount.
A few poor men, plain and of no account,
Were nearest to Him: them His eye would seek,
While from its glance love's radiance seemed to break,
And beam o'er multitudes too vast to count.
I strove, as from an oracle divine,
To catch some words to treasure in my heart;
And, though a distant place, alas! was mine,
And those dear accents reached me but in part,
One hallowed sentence to my ear was borne:
The words were these: "Blessed are they that mourn."

C. E.

TO ONE BEREAVED OF MANY RELATIVES.

Thou hast laid up so many treasures there,
Where there is no more sorrow, no more pain,
That I esteem thee rich in heavenly gain,
E'en by the loss of those who dearest were.
Oh! while thy deepest, tenderest thoughts they share,
When, sad and desolate, thou sighest in vain
Their voice to hear, their smile to hear again,
Pour out thy heart, pour out thy griefs in prayer;
That blest employ will reunite thy soul
With those whose adorations never cease;
That hallowed intercourse each grief control,
And o'er thy bosom shed celestial peace.
Though powerless human sympathy be found,
Sweet converse with thy God can heal each wound.

C. E.

Let them be one! thus spake the Word,
And bound their hands and hearts in one,
The woman and her rightful lord,
While ever wheels of time should run;
But soon death comes, and snaps the chain,
The two no longer one remain!

The parent presses to his breast
His own dear child in tenderest love,
Finds in his image balm and rest,
A symbol of the bliss above;
But fondly tho' the parent cling,
Death comes, and leaves him sorrowing.

'Tis thus with every earthly bond,
Hand knit to hand, and heart to heart,
Pure or impure, death takes his wand,
And friends most loved oft soonest part;
Nor tears avail, nor groans, nor cries,
Death will not yield his victories.

Yet hath the voice been heard again,
Let them be one! and in that hour
The tenderest sympathies remain,
And in Christ's strength defy death's power;
He hath not won, tho' husband, wife,
Or child, pass with the passing life.

The bond survives in brighter skies,
And higher worlds, and richer bliss,
Where purest love all change defies,
Fraught with an innate happiness.
One in the Lord, nor storms, nor fate,
Nor life, nor death, can separate!

TO DIE IS GAIN.

To die is gain! then down repose
Our weary limbs and breast,
As turns the pilgrim at day's close
To his soft couch of rest;
No sorrow, sighing, toil, or pain,
Hunger, or thirst—and this is gain.

And more, borne on the viewless wind,
The spirit soars away;
Leaves these dull regions far behind,
And springs to meet the day;
And sees the Lamb for sinners slain,
Vision of bliss—and this is gain.

In hope to ascend Thy holy hill,
We lift our gaze above,
Our meat and drink to do His will,
Whose very name is Love.
Calm waiting till the shadows fly,
Is Christ to live,—'tis gain to die.

A FRAGMENT.

The sun may shine, and the young year
Betoken brighter days to come;
This casts a shadow on a bier,
And a lone tomb.

'Twere long to tell of hope's bright flowers,
Nipt in the bud as by a spell
Of the rude shock, woe's lingering hours,
'Twere long to tell.

Enough to know, tho' brief his span,
Sudden the call, and sharp the strife,
Thro' all his term of days there ran
The hidden life.

A triumph that still chamber saw,
Ere yet the spirit left the clay;
Grace rose o'er the terrors of the law;
Death vanquished lay.

Not on the tomb I seek thy name,
Toward heav'n's blue vault I raise mine eye;
Earth may awhile thine ashes claim,
Thy soul's on high.

Why seek the living 'mong the dead!
'Tis but the dust that slumbers here,
The life is with the spirit fled
To some bright sphere.

Let death his triumphs vaunt in night,
Spread his cold couch for them that lie;
The soul that wings its heavenward flight
Can never die.

PSALM CXXI.—The keeper of Israel.

To the everlasting mountains I lift my weary eyes;
Oh! whence for me, in trouble, shall hope and help arise?

From mountain nor from valley shall help to thee be given;
Thy hope is in Jehovah who made the earth and heaven.

Thy foot shall never stumble, for He thy way shall keep;
His loving eye beholds thee, it hath no need of sleep.

Thy keeper ne'er shall slumber, so be not thou afraid;
His presence is around thee, for solace and for shade.

The fierce sun shall not smite thee at burning noon
of day,
The moon shall not affright thee with pale deceiving ray.

In thy coming and thy going shall evil harm thee
never,
Jehovah is thy keeper, for ever and for ever.

ANON.

THE autumn leaf is sere and dead,
It floats upon the water's bed;
I would not be a leaf to die
Without recording sorrow's sigh.

The winds and waves, with sudden wail,
Tell all the same unvaried tale;
I've none to smile when I am free,
And when I weep, to weep with me!

Yet in my dreams a form I view,
That thinks on me, and loves me too;
I start—and when the vision's flown,
I weep that I am all alone!

HENRY KIRKE WHITE.

A REPLY.

But art thou thus indeed alone?
Quite unbefriended? All unknown?
And hast thou then His name forgot,
Who formed thy frame, and fixed thy lot?

Is not His voice in evening's gale?
Beams not with Him the star so pale?
There's not a leaf can fade or die
Unnoticed by his watchful eye!

Each fluttering hope, each anxious fear,
Each lonely wish, each silent tear,
To thine Almighty friend are known!
And sayest thou, thou art all alone?

J. Conder.

The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown;
No traveller ever reached that blest abode,
Who found not thorns and briars on his road,
For He who knew what human hearts would prove,
How slow to learn the dictates of His love;
That hard by nature, and of stubborn will,
A life of ease would make them harder still;
In pity to the souls His grace designed
To rescue from the ruins of mankind,

Called for a cloud to darken all their years,
And said, "Go spend them in the vale of tears."
O balmy gales of soul-reviving air!
O salutary streams that murmur there;
These flowing from the fount of grace above,
Those breathed from lips of everlasting love.
The flinty soil indeed their feet annoys;
Chill blasts of trouble nip their springing joys.
An envious world will interpose its frown
To mar delights superior to its own,
And many a pang, experienced still within,
Reminds them of their hated inmate, sin;
But ills of every shape and every name,
Transform'd to blessings, miss their cruel aim;
And every moment's calm that soothes the breast,
Is given in earnest of eternal rest.

COWPER.

WHEN faith and love which parted from thee never,
Had ripened thy just soul to dwell with God,
Meekly thou didst resign this earthly load
Of death, called life; which us from life doth sever;
Thy works, and alms, and all thy good endeavour,
Staid not behind, nor in the grave were trod;
But as faith pointed with her golden rod,
Followed thee up to joy and bliss for ever!

ANON

"And she answered, It is well."

O YE, who, with the silent tear
And saddened step, assemble here,
To bear these cold, these loved remains,
Where dark and cheerless silence reigns,
Your sorrows hush, your griefs dispel,
The Saviour lives—and "All is Well."

Those eyes, indeed, are rayless now,
And pale that cheek, and chill that brow;
Yet, could that lifeless form declare
The joys its soul is called to share,
How would those lips rejoice to tell,
The Saviour lives—and "All is well."

Come, then, let us no more repine,
But all the glorious anthem join;
And while our fondest hopes decay,
Still learn to wipe our tears away,
And loud the heavenly chorus swell,
The Saviour lives—and "All is Well!

HUIE.

"I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth."

The soul with Jesus rests above,
The body lies in gentle sleep,—
Heart can warm heart in holy love,
The peace of heaven is pure and deep;
No more weighed down by pain and strife
Her spirit is refreshed and free;
After the battle-hour of life,
Saviour, she findeth rest in Thee!

A rest unbroken now by fears,
A peace she never knew before,
For God hath wiped away her tears,
And grief may never touch her more.
She can her Maker's face behold,
His deep love bursteth on her sight,
Heaven doth its glory now unfold,
Herself a beam of that great light.

By the soft spell of love drawn near,
The child its Father now can see,
The word of Jesus now is clear,
"Thy God and Father loveth thee!"

That great unfathomed mystery
The soul at length can understand,
And knoweth what it is to be
Joint heir with Christ in that bright land.

The weary body resteth here,—
The dust in earth's dark bosom laid
Shall at the Saviour's voice appear
In beauty and in strength arrayed;
United with the spirit pure,
From the cold grave in glory raised,
That day of joy shall aye endure,
The Lamb shall evermore be praised.

Through the wide waste we travel on,
'Mid streaming tears we think and dream
Of that fair heaven where she is gone,—
Around our path its visions gleam.
When shall we meet thy chosen band?
When will that day of gladness be?
O! lend us now Thy helping hand,
Lord Jesus, come! we trust in Thee.

ANON.

MYSTERIOUS are His ways, whose power
Brings forth that unexpected hour,
When minds that never met before
Shall meet, unite, and part no more.

It is the allotment of the skies,
The hand of the Supremely Wise,
That guides and governs our affections,
And plans and orders our connections,
Directs us in our distant road,
And marks the bounds of our abode.
This page of providence quite new,
And now just opening to our view,
Employs our present thoughts and pains,
To guess and spell what it contains;
But day by day, and year by year,
Will make the dark enigma clear,
And furnish us perhaps at last,
Like other scenes already past,
With proof that we and our affairs
Are part of a Jehovah's cares;
For God unfolds by slow degrees
The purport of His deep decrees,
Sheds every hour a clearer light,
In aid of our defective sight,
And spreads at length before the soul
A beautiful and perfect whole.

COWPER.

I COULD not fear—a message from above
Reveal'd Thy name, and told me it was love.
There were no words, but thoughts of peace divine
Breathed from Thy spirit, and inhaled by mine.
That hour I proved, 'mid sorrow, loss, and care,
The power of faith, the prevalence of prayer.
And since that hour, whatever ills assailed,
I often proved it—and it never failed;
And I have learn'd at length to know
The gain of grief, the blessedness of woe;
To feel that heavenly peace vouchsaf'd alone,
When all the blandishments of life are gone.
Yet long I struggled with the chastening rod,
Marvelling and murmuring at the ways of God;
Who seem'd to shroud His smiles in wayward gloom,
And blight the hopes Himself had bade to bloom.
I know Him now! and ah, I know the heart
That thus in mercy He ordain'd to smart;
In mercy made each earthly prospect dim,
That it might centre all its love on Him.
My broken spirit humbled in the dust,
Mourned o'er its chastisement, but owned it just!
O God of mercy, while I deemed thy wrath
Had swept the fairest blossoms from my path,
The angel of Thy presence still was near,
Treasur'd each sigh, and number'd every tear;

He bade the fickle hopes of life depart,
And yield to God an undivided heart;
And prove his power, whatever lot befal,
To guide, to comfort, and to save thro' all.

Rev. T. E. Hankinson.

ADDRESSED TO MOTHERS AND SISTERS OF ——

O grieve not for him with the wildness of sorrow,
As those that in hopeless despondency weep;
From God's holy word consolation we borrow,
For souls that in Jesus confidingly sleep.

Lament not your loved one, but triumph the rather,
To think of the promise, the prayer of the Lamb,
"Your joy shall be full," and "I will, O my Father!
That those whom thou gav'st me, may be where I am."

His own sacred lip the assurance hath given,
"Believe in your God, in your Saviour believe,
I go to prepare you a mansion in heaven,
And quickly returning, my own will receive."

In rapture unsated, in glory unclouded,
He rests before God, with the angels of light;
Till the form in corruption and darkness now shrouded,
Shall rise at the trump with the soul to unite.

Nay, weep not for him, for the flow'r of the morning,
So dear to your bosoms, so fair to your eyes;
But weep for the souls unbelievingly scorning
The counsel and truth of the "God only wise."

He came to the cross while his young cheek was blooming,
And raised to the Lord the bright glance of his eye;
And when, o'er its beauty, death's darkness was glooming,
The cross did uphold him, the Saviour was nigh.

I saw the black pall o'er his relics extended;
I wept, but they were not the tear-drops of woe;
The pray'r of my soul, that in fervour ascended,
Was, "Lord, when Thou callest, like him may I go."

ANON.

THE DESERTED HOUSE.

Gloom is upon thy lonely hearth,
O silent house, once filled with mirth;
Sorrow is in the breezy sound
Of thy tall poplars whispering around.

The shadow of departed hours
Hangs dim upon thy early flowers;
E'en in thy sunshine seems to brood
Something more deep than solitude.

Fair art thou, fair to a stranger's gaze,
Mine own sweet home of other days!
My children's birthplace! yet for me
It is too much to look on thee.

Too much! for all about thee spread,
I feel the memory of the dead,
And almost linger for the feet
That never more my step shall greet.

The looks, the smiles, all vanished now,
Follow me where thy roses blow;
The echoes of kind household words
Are with me 'midst thy singing birds.

What now is left me, but to raise
From thee, lone spot! my spirit's gaze,
To lift, thro' tears, my straining eye
Up to my Father's house on high!

And they are there, whose long-loved mien
In earthly home no more is seen;
Whose places, where they smiling sate,
Are left unto us desolate.

We miss them when the board is spread;
We miss them when the prayer is said;
Upon our dreams their dying eyes,
In still and mournful moments rise.

Holy ye were, and good, and true!
No change can cloud my thoughts of you;
Guide me like you to live and die,
And reach my Father's house on high!

MRS. HEMANS.

WE did not quite believe this world would give
To us what ne'er it had to any given;
That round our bark eternal calms should live,
That ours should ever be a stormless heaven:

Yet we, long season, were like men that dwell
In safe abodes beside some perilous shore,
Who, when they hear the northern whirlwinds swell,
Who, when they hear the furious breakers roar;

Think, it may be, but with too slight a thought,
On them that in the great deep labouring are,
Where winds are high, and waves are madly wrought,
And lend them, it may be, a passing prayer.

Thus we, beloved, in our safe recess,
Did evermore abroad the voices hear,
In the great world, of sorrow and distress,
With pity heard, yet us they came not near:

Or if at times they might approach us nigh,
And if at times we mourned, yet still remained
Our inner world untouched—the sanctuary
Of our blest home by sorrow unprofaned;

When lo! that cup which we had seen go round
To one and to another, cup of pain,
We of a sudden at our own lips found,
And it was given us deep of that to drain.

* * * * *

O day, whose anguish never shall wax old,
When we no longer might our fears deny,
When our heart's secret thoughts we dared unfold
One to the other that our child would die.

Oh! freshly may in us the memory live
Of the mere lie which then the world did seem,
And all the world could promise or could give—
A breaking bubble! a departing dream!

* * * * *

But now a pearl is from our chaplet dropt,
But now a flower is from our garland riven;
One singing fountain of our joy is stopt,
One brightest star extinguished in our heaven.

One only—yet oh! who may guess the change
That by that one has been among us wrought?
How all familiar things are waxen strange
Or sad,—what silence to our house is brought?

* * * * *

And we perchance too confident of old,
As though our blessings all were ours in fee,
Those that remain now tremulously hold,
From anxious perturbations never free;

Oh! thought which should not be, oh! faith too
weak,
To tremble at the slightest ache or pain,
At the least languor of the changeful cheek
With terrors hardly to be stilled again.

Yet thus we walk within our house, in grief
For what has been, in fear for what may be,
And still the advancing days bring no relief,
But make us all our loss more plainly see.

* * * * *

And yet, beloved, why should we lament
That vanished time with passionate regret—
Not rather marvelling at the rare consent
Of blessings which so long above us met?

And what though now we from this grief express
But little save its bitter, yet be sure
In this its mere unmingled bitterness
It shall not, cannot evermore endure.

But comforts shall arise, like fountains sweet
Fresh springing in a salt and dreary main,
Fountains of sweetest wave, which shipmen meet
In the waste ocean, an unlooked-for gain.

* * * * *

So time no less has gentle skill to heal
When our fair hopes have fall'n, our earth-built towers,
How busy wreck and ruin to conceal
With a new over-growth of leaves and flowers.

Nor time alone—a better hand is here
Where it has wounded, watching to upbind,
Which when it takes away in love severe,
Doth some austerer blessing leave behind.

Oh! higher gifts has brought this mournful time,
Than all those years which did so smoothly run,
For what if they, life's flower and golden prime,
Had something served to knit our hearts in one;

Yet doth that all seem little now, compared
With our brief fellowship in tears and pain;
To share the things which we have newly shared,
This makes a firmer bond, a holier chain:

To have together held that aching head,
To have together heard that piteous moan,
To have together knelt beside that bed,
When life was flitting, and when life had flown—

And to have one of ours, whose ashes sleep
Where the great church its solemn shadow flings;
Oh! love has now its roots that stretch more deep,
That strike and stretch beneath the grave of things.

Oh! more than this, yet holier bonds there are,
For we his spirit shall to ours feel nigh,
And know he lives, whenever we in prayer
Hold with heaven's saintly throng communion high.

Then wherefore more? or wherefore this to thee—
A faithful suppliant at that inner shrine,
At which who kneel, to them 'tis given to see
How pain and grief, and anguish are divine?

R. C. Trench.

I'm but a stranger here—
Heaven is my home.
Earth is a desert drear—
Heaven is my home.
Danger and sorrow stand
Round me on every hand;
Heaven is my Father-land—
Heaven is my home.

What tho' the tempest rage—
Heaven is my home;
Short is my pilgrimage—
Heaven is my home.
And time's wild wintry blast
Soon shall be overpast;
I shall reach home at last—
Heaven is my home.

There at my Saviour's side—
Heaven is my home;
I shall be glorified—
Heaven is my home.
There are the good, the blest,
Those I loved most and best,
And there I too shall rest—
Heaven is my home.

Therefore I murmur not—
Heaven is my home.
Whate'er my earthly lot—
Heaven is my home.
And I shall surely stand
There at my Lord's right hand;
Heaven is my Father-land—
Heaven is my home.

ANON.

To earth's deep bosom not in vain
We lend our treasures; o'er the land
The patient sower casts the grain;
We hope that heaven, with bounteous hand,
Will perfect what his toil hath planned:
A costlier seed, a holier trust,
Weeping, on earth's cold breast we lay;
Hoping that from the silent dust,
When grief and tears shall pass away,
The flower may bloom in endless day.

F. H.

UPON THE DEATH OF A WIFE.

Whoe'er, like me, with trembling anguish brings
His dearest earthly treasure to these springs;
Whoe'er, like me, to soothe distress and pain,
Shall court these salutary springs in vain:
Condemned, like me, to hear the faint reply,
To mark the fading cheek, the sinking eye,
From the chill brow to wipe the damps of death,
And watch in dumb despair the shortening breath:
If chance should bring him to this humble line,
Let the sad mourner know his pangs were mine.
Ordained to lose the partner of my breast,
Whose virtue warmed me, and whose beauty blessed,

Framed every tie that binds the heart to prove,
Her duty friendship, and her friendship love.
But yet, remembering that the parting sigh
Appoints the just to slumber, not to die,
The starting tear I checked—I kissed the rod—
And not to earth resigned her, but to God!

LORD PALMERSTON.

OH! I would speak
Of light from darkness, good from evil, brought
By an Almighty power; and how all things,
If we will not refuse the good they bring,
Are messages of an Almighty love,
And full of blessings. Oh, be sure of this—
All things are mercies while we count them so:
And this believing, not keen poverty,
Nor wasting years of pain, or slow disease,
Nor death, which in a moment may lay low
Our pleasant plants;—not these, if they should come,
Shall ever drift our bark of faith ashore,
Whose steadfast anchor is securely cast
Within the veil—the veil of things unseen,
Which now we know not, but shall hereafter know.

REV. R. C. TRENCH.

Now, dearest friends, a short farewell,
Until at home we meet!
Oft shall remembrance fondly dwell
On days and scenes that owned the spell
Of our communion sweet;—

So sweet, at times it seemed a faint,
A transitory taste,
Of converse treasured for the saint
In the bright world—which, who shall paint?
The heaven to which we haste!

For oh! of less than heavenly mould
Our friendship ne'er shall be;
Nor like the world's, by death controlled,
But fervent, pure; and we, enrolled
Friends for eternity.

So when on earth we cease to dwell
In pilgrim converse sweet;
We'll need no other parting knell
Than—"Dearest friends, a short farewell,
Till soon *at home* we meet!"

GRINFIELD

THE END.

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